

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/21/0124

Site Address: Woodstock
Somerset Lane
Cefn Coed
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 2PA

Development: Attic conversion comprising of an increase in roof ridge height and change from hipped roof to gable roof with dormers to front, rear and side

Case Officer: Caroline Pulley

Site Visit: 20th May 2021

Application Expiry Date: 3rd June 2021

Consultation reply date expired: 3rd May 2021

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a single storey dwelling situated along Somerset Lane in the residential area of Cefn Coed. The property is bound by the highway to the west, a large detached two-storey dwelling to the north, a bungalow to the south and a detached dwelling to the east. The extended property has a large 'L' shaped footprint measuring approximately 30m in length and a maximum of 14m in depth. Its principal elevation containing the main entrance door faces an easterly direction towards the side elevation of the neighbouring bungalow known as Rosewater. Its rear elevation faces north and is at a lower level to the neighbouring property known as Bryncerddin. The property has a small private garden area to the east, which is laid primarily with artificial turf. To the north, there is a narrow and enclosed area of garden which is stepped in level and is partially raised above the level of the house. The roadside boundary of the property is enclosed by an attractive stone wall and a sliding timber gate.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to increase the ridge height of the dwelling by a metre and construct four flat roof dormers to the front, side and rear. As a result of the proposal, the main original roof of the dwelling would be changed from a hip to a gable. Two dormers measuring 6.1m wide, 3m deep and 2.5m in height would be erected along the eastern and western roof plane of the main dwelling. These two dormers would each contain two windows serving a bedroom and an en-suite bathroom. Along the main front roof plane, the proposal seeks to construct a 6.9m wide dormer containing two windows serving a bedroom and a landing. This dormer would measure 3m in depth and 2.5m in height. To the rear and along the northern roof plane, a 14m wide dormer is proposed measuring 3m in depth and 2.5m in height. This extension would contain three windows serving an en-suite bathroom, a dressing room and a bedroom. In total, the development

would provide four first floor bedrooms. The ground floor would also be reconfigured internally to provide living accommodation including a large kitchen, a games room, sitting room, office and one bedroom. The garage, sitting room and games room would remain separated from the main dwelling in terms of access arrangements as per the existing layout.

It is noted that there are some minor discrepancies on the submitted drawings. On the existing side elevation 1, a kitchen window is missing from the drawing and on existing elevation 2, a dining room patio door is missing. Whilst these discrepancies have been noted, the proposed development is clearly set out and there would be no prejudice in this respect.

PLANNING HISTORY

The recent planning history relating to the property is as follows:

P/15/0359	Retention of change of use from dwelling with dog grooming, dog boarding and dog training business. Refused – 23.12.2015
P/11/0138	Erection of garage Approved – 19.07.2011
P/03/0169	Conversion of garage into living accommodation and extension Approved – 16.09.2003
P/99/0168	Erection of single-storey bungalow and detached garage Approved – 02.07.1999

CONSULTATION

None undertaken with this type of application.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining properties.

No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11 (February 2021) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant sections are:

Paragraphs 3.3 – 3.16 sets out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context.

Paragraph 3.9 refers to character and states that *'...the special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations. A clear rationale behind the design decisions made, based on site and context analysis, a strong vision, performance requirements and design principles, should be sought throughout the development process and expressed, when appropriate, in a design and access statement...'*

Paragraph 3.14 refers to context appraisal and states that these *'...should be used to determine the appropriateness of a development proposal in responding to its surroundings. This process will ensure that a development is well integrated into the fabric of the existing built environment...'*

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TAN to this application is as follows:-

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

Paragraph 4.16 and 4.17 state that *'...achieving good design is the responsibility of all those involved in the design process...who should consider how each aspect of the design process meets the objectives of good design and responds to local context...'*

Local Policy

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries;

Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking;

LDP Policy SW11 is the main primary consideration and points 1 to 3 are particularly relevant and state that new development should *'...be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density; integrate effectively with adjacent spaces, the public realm and historic environment to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape; and, not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact, and incorporate a good standard of landscape design...'*

- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG's)

It is noted in the SPG that *'...any extension or alteration to your property should be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of its scale, siting and appearance, to ensure it complements neighbouring properties and the wider street scene...'*

'...the size, shape and siting of an extension to your house must be of an appropriate height and form that is in keeping and subservient to the existing building and its setting...'

More specifically with regards to dormer extensions, the SPG states that careful consideration should be given to the siting and design of dormer windows to ensure that they are a sympathetic addition to the dwelling, particularly in terms of their size, roof style, fenestration and materials. It confirms that dormer windows should be '*...small, incorporating a pitched roof that reflects the style of the dwelling and be discretely located to the side or rear of the dwelling. Flat roof dormer windows will often appear too bulky, out of proportion and can make the dwelling appear top heavy...*'

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The dwelling is located within an established residential area in the settlement boundary and as such, the principle of extending the property is acceptable subject to the compliance with relevant policies and material planning considerations. Therefore, the key issues to consider under the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed increase to the mass and height of the dwelling in association with the proposed flat roof dormer extensions would amount to an acceptable form of development with regard to the impact of the scheme upon the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene. The impact upon residential amenity and parking and highway safety are also important considerations.

Character and Appearance

The proposed increase in the roof height and the erection of the dormers would enable the number of bedrooms in the property to increase by providing four additional bedrooms (with en-suites) in the roof space. However, the proposal to change the shape of the dwelling's main roof would give the property a discordant appearance. While it is noted that the property does have some gable features to its front elevation, the main sections of the roofline are brought together by a series of hipped roofs. By changing the main roof to a gable, an awkward and conflicting junction is created between the remaining part of the building whereby the roof hips back over the games and sitting room.

In addition to this, the proposal seeks to erect a series of flat roof dormers across the main roof plane. The dormers due to their number, design, size, and bulk result in top heavy, disproportionate and dominant additions, which would significantly harm the proportions, character and appearance of the dwelling. This in combination with the new gabled roof, gives the property an over-gabled and discordant appearance which is detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The increase in height of the roof would accentuate the prominence of the development and would further exacerbate the detrimental impact this scheme would have on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to LDP Policy SW11 and SPG 6 - A Design Guide for Householder Development.

Residential amenity

Given the positioning of the property and its relationship with neighbouring dwellings, the proposed increase in the height and mass of the dwelling would not have an overbearing or a significant level of overshadowing impact on the neighbouring properties to the north, south and east of the application property. The greatest potential impact arising from this proposal would be the overlooking impact arising from increasing the roof height and providing an additional level of accommodation at the property.

In this respect, it is noted that the large dormer proposed to the rear of the dwelling would contain three windows, which would face onto the front and side garden of the neighbouring property known as Bryncerddin (to the north). This property has recently been granted permission for a large single storey extension along its western side. While acknowledging that the rear dormer would directly face the garden area of this property, two of the three windows would serve non-habitable rooms and could be obscurely glazed. The third window, sited in the north-eastern corner of the property, would serve a bedroom. While there is potential for some overlooking to occur from this window, given the differences in levels between the two properties, the majority of the bedroom window would be obscured behind a hedgerow. This limits any potential overlooking from the bedroom window. In addition, it is noted that a separation distance of approximately 30m would be maintained between the bedroom window and the front elevation of Bryncerddin. It is also acknowledged that the neighbouring property has a driveway located along the dividing boundary. This separates the neighbour's garden area from the dividing boundary.

The dormer proposed along the east facing roof plane of the property would overlook the applicant's side garden area. A distance of 10m would be maintained between the proposed dormer and the dividing boundary with the property known as Bryn-Onen and a distance of approximately 26m between the proposed windows and this property's side extension. While there is some concern that the proposed windows would be sited in close proximity to the neighbours garden and property, given the separation distances, it is not considered that the overlooking impact would be significantly harmful. It should also be noted that a similar scale dormer (that is sited 10.05m away from the boundary) could be erected along this elevation of the property without the need for planning permission. Taking this into account, the potential overlooking impact to this neighbouring property is deemed acceptable.

In respect of the dormers proposed to the front of the property, again, due to the increase in height, there is some potential for some overlooking to occur to parts of the garden area of the bungalow known as Rosewater. However, given the orientation of this neighbouring property and its positioning in relation to the application property, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a harmful level of overlooking. Additionally, no letters of objection or representation have been received to the scheme as a result of the publicity exercise undertaken with neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highway Safety

Having considered the on-site parking facilities to the front of the dwelling which could accommodate three vehicles, the proposed development would not give rise to any significant highway safety issues. As such, the proposal would comply with Policy SW11 of the LDP in this respect.

Conclusion

The proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area and therefore does not accord with LDP Policy SW11 and SPG 6 - A Design Guide for Householder Development and accordingly the following recommendation is made:

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-

Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

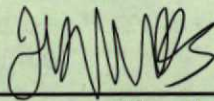
Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE REFUSED for the following REASON

REASON:

1. The proposed development by virtue of its design, bulk and size would result in a prominent, disproportionate and unsympathetic form of development that would significantly harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

1/6/21