

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2023/0001594/HHA
Site:	6 Rochester Road
Ward:	Earlsdon
Proposal:	Loft conversion with a dormer window
Case Officer:	Grace Goodman

SUMMARY

The application proposes to erect a dormer to the rear roof slope of a semi-detached house located within the Earlsdon Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact upon the neighbour's amenity and character of the main house.

Work on the dormer started prior to the submission of the planning application, however subsequently stopped. The application has gone through several revisions before a design that was suitable for the location and property was agreed upon. The part constructed dormer will be changed in accordance with the proposed plans.

BACKGROUND

The application has been recommended for approval. The application has received 2 public representations objecting to the proposal. The application has been called into Committee by a Ward Councillor.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	Request of councillor
Current use of site:	Residential dwelling
Proposed use of site:	Residential dwelling with dormer

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to approve planning permission subject to conditions.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposal will have an appropriate visual appearance and layout
- The proposal will not cause loss of light to nearest neighbours
- The proposal accords with Policies DE1, DS3, H5 & HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017, together with the aims of the NPPF.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the northern side of Rochester Road close to a set of crossroads. The rear of the property is visible from Shaftesbury Avenue. The property is an Edwardian semi-detached red brick two storey house with slate tiled roof and is located within Earlsdon Conservation Area. The surrounding area is made up of similar style properties.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The flat roofed dormer is on the rear roof slope and proposed to be 2.85m in depth, 1.65m in height and a width of 5m. It is to be tile hung to match the existing roof.

PLANNING HISTORY

None

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve".

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application is:

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPD – Householder Design Guide

CONSULTATION

Statutory

None

Non-statutory

Objections have been received from:

- Conservation

Neighbour consultation

a site notice was posted, and a press notice was displayed in the Coventry Telegraph on 7th September 2023.

Two letters of objection have been received raising the following material planning considerations:

- a) Privacy issues
- b) Overlooking
- c) Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Further notification letters sent 11th April 2024 after significant changes to the design were made. Two letters of objection were received raising concerns in regard to privacy and overlooking.

Within the letters received during both consultation periods, the following non-material planning considerations were raised, these cannot be given due consideration in the planning process:

- Impact value of neighbouring property

Councillor Kelly has asked that the application be considered by Planning Committee for determination for the following reasons

- Out of keeping with the rest of street scene
- Not appropriate in a conservation area
- Excessive overlooking of neighbouring gardens

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

APPRAISAL

The main issues in determining this application are principle of development, the impact upon the character of the area and heritage assets, the impact upon neighbouring amenity.

Principle of development

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 11, states that “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For Decision Making, this means:-

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

Impact on visual amenity

Policy DE1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure high quality design and development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area.

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 127 states that “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The NPPF further states (at paragraph 130) “Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).”

The application site is located in a residential area where it is considered sustainable, acceptable and common to extend homes. However, it is important to ensure that extensions are in keeping with the design and character of the existing house and of the surrounding area and there will be no harmful impact on residential amenity. Materials, colours, textures and local distinctiveness should all be considered within the context of the local area in order to ensure a high-quality urban environment, in accordance with policies DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance for Extending Your Home, unless relevant planning considerations indicate otherwise, including whether or not a proposal will cause:

- Loss of light;
- Overlooking and loss of privacy;
- Over-development of a site;
- Visual intrusion; and
- Impact on the street scene and character of the area

The extension is located on the rear roof slope of the property and will only be visible from the street scene from one location of Shaftesbury Road. Consequently, the dormer is not considered to have any significant adverse impact upon the street scene. The roof

of the property has an 'L' shape and the dormer as built follows this and has substantial massing. However, this application proposes to reduce the size of the dormer, therefore one side of the dormer is significantly set up from the eaves and this helps to reduce the scale of the dormer and ensure it is proportionate within the roof slope.

The windows have been reduced from long thin shaped windows to more standard shaped windows to reflect the proportions of the original windows below, which not only are more in keeping with the character of the area but also reduce the impact of overlooking over long thin shaped windows.

It is not uncommon to have dormers in the area and the overall scale, materials and design are in keeping with the size of the property and is considered to be acceptable.

Impact on residential amenity

The dormer is not considered to result in any more overlooking or result in more loss of privacy than results from the existing window arrangement to the rear. The windows within the dormer are proposed to be of a similar style. The dormer window is set up the roof slope and in from the side boundaries. No. 6 Rochester Road has a rear garden length of 13m, and the surrounding properties all have similar garden lengths therefore there is a minimum distance of at least 20m from the dormer to the nearest neighbours on Shaftesbury Avenue. This separation distance is in accordance with the guidance set out in the Householder Design Guide SPD. Therefore, given the position of the windows away from the side boundaries and the length of the rear garden it is not considered that this would result in any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers.

Heritage character of the area and Heritage Assets

Local Plan Policy HE2 reflects NPPF policy and states that development proposals involving heritage assets in general and listed buildings in particular, should acknowledge the significance of the existing building and the area by means of their siting, massing, form, scale, materials and detail.

The Conservation Officer has objected to the proposals and has requested that the dormer is separated into two smaller dormers. However, all other concerns that conservation raised such as the bulky size of the dormer and shape of windows have both been addressed within the current proposals by reducing the size of the dormer significantly and swapping out the proposed windows.

Whilst two smaller dormer windows would provide a better design solution the proposed, it is not considered to be necessary to split the dormer into two smaller size dormers to make the proposal acceptable. It is not considered that this would significantly reduce the impact upon the conservation area due to the limited visibility of the dormer from the street scene. On balance it is considered that the changes proposed provide an acceptable design which would result in less than substantial harm.

Highway considerations

As this is a householder application, it is considered that the proposal will not cause any impact on highway safety or result in the loss of on-site car parking.

The proposal is not considered to result in any concerns in relation to increased parking/ traffic.

Other Matters:

Impacting value of neighbouring dwellings is not a material planning consideration.

Equality Implications

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.

There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

The equality implications of the development are as follows;

Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and will not result in any significant impact upon neighbour amenity, or the character of the Conservation Area, subject to relevant conditions. The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the development is in accordance with: Policies DE1, HE2 and H5 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017, together with the aims of the NPPF.

CONDITIONS / REASON

1.	The development hereby permitted shall be completed within 2 years from the date of this permission in full accordance with the approved plans and schedule of works.
Reason	<i>To ensure alterations are carried out in a timely manner and to ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 and HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016</i>

<p>2.</p>	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <p>Proposed elevations DWG PL12 Rev D Proposed floor plans DWG PL11 Rev D Existing Floors and Site Location Plans DWG A276 PL10</p>
<p>Reason</p>	<p><i>For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</i></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Prior to their incorporation into the development hereby permitted, sample details of all facing and roofing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall be installed only in full accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development and thereafter shall be retained and shall not be removed or altered in any way.</p>
<p>Reason</p>	<p><i>To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i></p>