



Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 24/09/19

gan H C Davies BA (Hons) Dip UP
MRTPI

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 21.10.2019

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24/09/19

by H C Davies BA (Hons) Dip UP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 21.10.2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X6910/D/19/3236115

Site address: 23 Pant y Fforest, Ebbw Vale NP23 5FR

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Robert Harden against the decision of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref C/2019/0121, dated 18 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is: Raise roof of existing bungalow to create first floor and installation of dormer windows to front and rear roof planes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a detached single storey property, fronting onto a cul-de-sac at the northern end of Pant y Fforest residential estate. The estate was 'self-build' and thus features houses of varying designs and finishes, some of which have been extended in different ways. Nonetheless, there is a consistency of scale and form locally with dwellings on the eastern side of the main spinal road being two-storey in nature whilst to the western side, properties are generally single storey bungalows. The appeal property is simple in form and is seen as an integral part of the grouping of bungalows of similar style and appearance at this location. The modest and consistent character of this group is a distinct feature of this part of the street scene, and, notwithstanding the three two-storey dwellings along the eastern edge of the cul-de-sac, it forms the prevailing context for the proposed development.
 4. The proposed increase in the ridge height would be around 1.8 metres which would be reflected in a dwelling of significantly greater mass and bulk overall. Compared to the modest simplicity of the adjoining bungalows, the resultant dwelling would appear disproportionate in scale and overly dominant in a physical sense. In addition, the
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steeper roof profile and slope would be a noticeable disruption to the pleasing visual aspect of this group of bungalows. From the main spine road and the cul-de-sac road serving Nos 24 to 29 Pant Y Fforest, the increased height of the roof would be readily apparent, as would the proposed dormers in the rear elevation. Notwithstanding that in some circumstances a mixed townscape can offer interest and variety, in this case the proposal would demonstrably fail to respect its local context with consequent adverse effects on the character and appearance of the area.

5. The proposed dormers on both front and rear elevations would also be notable features of the property. In particular, the central dormer on the rear roof plane, on account of its ridge height, scale and mass would appear as a bulky and dominant feature, and this would conflict with the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Householder Design Guidance' (SPG) which states that dormer windows must be set well back from the eaves and down from the ridge. Given that dormers are not a characteristic feature of existing dwellings at Pant y Fforest, I consider the development would harmfully interrupt the prevailing roofscape and cause visual harm to the immediate area. Furthermore, the dormers would incorporate horizontal proportions, contrary to the vertical context set by the fenestration of the existing property, which would fail to respect the symmetry of the existing dwelling. I acknowledge that the development would not result in any overlooking or overshadowing, however, the proposed dormers represent incongruous additions to the roofscape drawing the eye and resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area when viewed in the context of the cul-de-sac and the estate overall.
6. I find that the proposed development would, thereby, conflict with Policy DM2: Design and Placemaking of the adopted Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (LDP) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure extensions to buildings reflect, complement and enhance the form, materials, architectural details and character of the original building and the wider area. Furthermore, it would have an unacceptable adverse visual impact on the townscape and would not accord with Policy DM1 (criterion 2b) of the LDP. For the same reasons, I also find that it conflicts with the general thrust of the advice contained within the adopted SPG.

Other Matters

7. My attention has been drawn to a similar proposal currently under construction at No.11 Pant y Fforest, which I saw on my site visit. In terms of context I note that this property forms part of a cul-de-sac consisting of 5 two-storey dwellings, in addition, the property to the rear is two-storey. Set against these dwellings, the proposal at No.11 does not appear disproportionate in scale or overly dominant. Furthermore, the increase in ridge height is significantly less than the appeal proposal and there are no dormers in the front elevation. The dissimilar site characteristics differentiates it from the case before me, and I have proceeded to determine the appeal based on the merits of the individual case.
8. I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objective of supporting safe, cohesive and resilient communities.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons, and taking into account all matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

H C Davies

INSPECTOR