

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2016

by M C J Nunn BA BPL LLB LLM BCL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 11th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/16/3152264

4 West Close, Cockfosters, Barnet, EN4 0AT

- 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 Kerry Kakoullis against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref: 16/00678/FUL, dated 16 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2016.
 - The development is described as a 'hip to gable with rear dormer loft conversion'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission granted for a hip to gable with rear dormer loft conversion at 4 West Close, Cockfosters, Barnet, EN4 0AT, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 16/00678/FUL, dated 16 February 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: D_16_ST_4WESTCLOSE_001 Rev A (Elevations and Plans); D_16_ST_4WESTCLOSE_001 Rev A (Location & Site Plan).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Reasons

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. The appeal site comprises a first floor maisonette that forms part of a semi-detached property of brick construction with rendered upper elevations. It has a hipped pitched tiled roof and small gable over the front bay window. The property forms one of a group of similar, semi-detached maisonettes in West Close. These maisonettes are regularly spaced in a symmetrical pattern around the Close, with some properties (including the appeal site) fronting on to Westpole Avenue. The regular spacing of the properties and the symmetrical layout creates a cohesive and attractive enclave of housing.
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3. The Council's main concern is that the replacement of a hipped roof with a gable-end would unbalance the appearance of the property. It is the case that none of the other properties within West Close have undertaken such works, meaning that the original design concept and layout of this group of housing remains intact. That said, there are other examples of 'hip to gable' extensions nearby, notably on the opposite side of Westpole Avenue. Indeed, this type of roof conversion is not an uncommon form of extension. The gable roof form would not result in development uncharacteristic of the wider locality, nor appear out of place here.
4. The proposed rear dormer is not especially large and would be set down from the ridge of the roof. It would also be set in each side from the roof edge and stepped in from the eaves. These features would ensure that the dormer extension would adequately sit within the roof slope and achieve an appropriately subordinate appearance. No objections have been raised by the Council on this aspect of the scheme, nor in relation to the insertion of roof lights. I see no reason to disagree. To my mind, the scheme would be adequately assimilated with the host property and wider area without spoiling their character.
5. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the area. It would comply with Core Policy 30 of the Core Strategy, and Policies DMD 13 and DMD 37 of the Development Management Document. Together, these policies seek to maintain and improve the quality of the built environment through high quality development. It would also accord with Policies 7.1 and 7.4 of the London Plan which have similar aims.
6. A commencement condition is necessary to comply with the relevant legislation. A condition requiring compliance with the approved plans is necessary for the avoidance of doubt. A condition requiring materials to match those of the existing building is necessary to safeguard the character of the building, as well as the wider area. Subject to these conditions, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Matthew C J Nunn

INSPECTOR