
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 February 2017

by AJ Steen BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 02 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/16/3165670

70 Queen Elizabeths Drive, Southgate N14 6RD

- 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 & Mrs Gavin & Nicola Newby against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 16/04701/HOU, dated 14 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is hip to gable roof extension, rear dormer window, Juliet balconies and rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed hip to gable extension and rear dormer window on the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Queen Elizabeths Drive is a residential street comprising mainly semi-detached dwellings of originally similar designs, most of which have been extended and adapted to provide a more individual appearance to each dwelling and varied character to the street. No. 70 has been altered and extended in the past, including a two storey side extension with a hipped roof above. The attached dwelling has been extended with a smaller first floor above the garage that is set back from the front elevation of the building. The other neighbour, to which no. 70 is not attached, has been extended in a similar manner to no. 70, leaving a narrow gap between the properties that widens at roof level with the hipped roofs at the boundary.
 4. The proposal would change the roof from a hip to a gable end, which would narrow that gap at roof level. This would have a significant effect on the appearance of the building and its relationship with that neighbouring property, significantly increasing the appearance of built form. In addition, it would add to the bulk at the side of this dwelling in comparison to the attached neighbour and this would further unbalance this pair of semi-detached houses. Consequently, the extension from a hip to gable end would harm the relationship between these properties to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
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5. I note that there are other properties in this street and surrounding streets where the gabled roofs have been converted to a hipped roof. Most are on properties that have not been extended to the side at first floor, so the gap between them and their unattached neighbour has been maintained. However, 1 and 100 Queen Elizabeths Drive have been extended in a similar manner. In the case of no. 1, this is the end property that borders the parkland opposite no. 70. Consequently, it does not have the same relationship to other built development. That at no. 100 neighbours a property with a two storey flat roofed side extension. Consequently, although there is only a narrow gap between the properties, this increases substantially at roof level such that it has a different effect on the character and appearance of the locality than would the extension proposed in this instance.
6. The proposed dormer would take up most of the roof at the rear of the property, inset a small distance from the side and eaves of the property but up to ridge height. As a result, it would dominate the roof, albeit that it would not be easily visible other than by occupiers of surrounding dwellings. A number of other dwellings in the vicinity have rear dormer windows, but not as large as that proposed in this instance. Consequently, whilst its visibility is limited, it would appear incongruous and its size would dominate the roof, such that it would not reflect the character and appearance of the area.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed hip to gable extension and rear dormer window would harm the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area. As such, it would be contrary to Policy CP30 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy and Policies DMD13 and DMD37 of the Development Management Document that seek to encourage high quality design that make a positive contribution to the character of the area, including that roof extensions should be of an appropriate size within the roof plane and inset from the eaves, ridge and edges of the roof and they should not disrupt the character or balance of the property or pair of properties.
8. I note the appellants wish to continue living in this community and to provide space for their growing family. This is not an uncommon scenario and, while I have sympathy to the circumstances described, they are not sufficient to outweigh the harm and policy conflict identified. Given the location of the extension to the side and rear of the roof, the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of occupiers of surrounding dwellings.
9. I note that other appeal cases have been provided¹ relating to hip to gable arrangements and dormers elsewhere. The gable roofs were not uncharacteristic of the locality in those cases, and the dormers were set away from the ridge, sides and eaves of the roofs or existing incongruous flat roof extensions mitigated the effect of the dormer proposed. Given those factors and the limited information regarding those appeals, the circumstances in these cases appear to differ from that in front of me. In any event, I need to consider this case on its own merits.
10. For the above reasons and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

AJ Steen INSPECTOR

¹ Appeal references: APP/Q5300/W/16/3152264 & APP/Q5300/D/13/2209053