

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2017

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3168111

42 Horncastle Road, London SE12 9LA

- 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 Mrs N Fleming against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/16/098019, dated 18 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a hip-to-gable roof extension and dormer roof extension to the rear roof slope, incorporating a Juliet balcony together with the installation of three rooflights to the front roof slope and a new second floor window to the side elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a hip-to-gable roof extension and dormer roof extension to the rear roof slope, incorporating a Juliet balcony together with the installation of three rooflights to the front roof slope and a new second floor window to the side elevation at 42 Horncastle Road, London SE12 9LA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/16/098019, dated 18 August 2016, and the plans submitted with it, 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: 16/42/1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; location and block plans.
 3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed hip-to-gable and dormer roof extensions to the character and appearance of the area around Horncastle Road.
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Reasons

3. No 42 Horncastle Road is an end- of-terrace, two-storey house located within a small cul-de-sac development off the southern side of the road. It is the southernmost of a short terrace of three houses which, in common with the other end-of-terrace and detached houses in the cul-de-sac, has a hipped roof. It has a relatively large rear garden. The proposed development would involve the alteration of the roof to form a gable end, with a large, almost full-width dormer extension to the new rear roof slope, allowing the creation of additional living space in the roof.
4. The houses along the length of Horncastle Road comprise largely a mix of short terraces with a small number of semi-detached and detached houses. Almost all have hipped roofs. There is a general uniformity of design and a distinctive symmetry across the terraces along the road in general, and this is particularly evident in the cul-de-sac, where the appeal property is to be found. Here there is an almost complete symmetry with a short terrace of three houses on each on the three sides of the turning head, and large detached houses in the south-eastern and south-western corners. The symmetry and the uniformity of design found in this grouping is a significant and characteristic feature.
5. DM Policy 31 of the Council's Development Management Local Plan (LP) indicates that extensions will not be permitted where they would adversely affect the architectural integrity of a group of buildings, or cause an incongruous element in terms of the important features of a character area. In this case, I find that the proposed hip-to-gable with rear extension would be something of a discordant feature in the context of its surroundings. It would add an asymmetric feature, somewhat detrimental to the architectural integrity of the terrace. I note, however, that the hip-to-gable element could be a permitted development in its own right. This is an important fall-back position.
6. The Council's Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) indicates that rear roof extensions should be set back a minimum of one metre behind the lines of eaves and a minimum of 0.50m from the gable, flank or party wall boundary. In this case, the dormer extension would be set in from the eaves and boundaries, though it would be marginally larger than would normally be permitted, set-back as it is only around 0.7m from its eaves, and 0.3m from the proposed gable-end. However, in this case, I consider that the dormer extension, whilst large, would not be harmful to the character of its surroundings, since the area around the cul-de-sac is relatively spacious and open. The dormer would, therefore, not be readily visible, except from a distance, and it would not appear prominent or dominant in its context.
7. The appellant contends that other almost identical developments have been permitted at Nos 9 and 13 Horncastle Road, and that the current proposal should therefore also be permitted. I note, however, that in the case of No 13 permission was granted in 2003, before the current LP and SPD were in place, while that of No 9 was apparently permitted largely in order to restore a symmetry to the terrace of which they are both a part. These examples do not, therefore, form any kind of precedent for the current proposal and, in any case, I have dealt with this proposal on its own merits, given the circumstances of its location, its immediate surroundings, and the existence of a significant fall-back position.

8. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area around Horncastle Road. It would not, on this basis, create any significant conflict with Policies DM30 and DM31 of the LP which set out general principles of urban design, and requiring development to be of a high and site-specific quality. It would also not significantly conflict with design guidance on roof extensions as contained in the SPD.

Conditions

9. I have attached a condition relating to plans because it is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. I have attached a further condition relating to materials in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR