

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2017

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 27th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/17/3170798

132 Powys Lane, Southgate N13 4HN

- 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 Mohammed Khan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 16/04716/HOU, dated 1 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with rear dormer with installation of new guttering along rear elevations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The loft conversion, which includes a gable end extension to the side of the main roof as well as a rear dormer, has already been constructed. The installation of new guttering has not yet been implemented. Therefore, I have treated this appeal as seeking retrospective planning permission for all elements apart from the new guttering.
3. The appellant highlights that a certificate of lawful proposed development was granted on 26 March 2014 for a loft conversion including a gable end extension to the side of the main roof and a rear dormer. I do not have a copy of the certificate, but have had regard to the plans provided by the appellant that purportedly go with the certificate. They show a gable end extension to the main roof very similar to what currently exists, and a smaller rear dormer.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Powys Lane is a suburban residential street of detached and semi-detached properties. A number of properties along the section of Powys Lane between Broomfield Park and the North Circular have enlarged their roof space to the side to form dormers or gable end extensions. While these extensions create variety and lead to an unbalancing of some semi-detached properties when viewed from the road, there remains overall uniformity along Powys Lane in terms of the size and architectural design of properties.
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6. I observed a number of rear dormers along the west side of Powys Lane other than the appeal site. These tend to retain space around the dormer on all sides, avoiding an overly dominant effect when viewed from rear gardens or adjoining side roads. Rear dormers along Dawlish Avenue to the north-west are larger, but still maintain space above the eaves.
7. The rear dormer at the appeal site is located on top of the eaves to the main property and occupies the full width of the rear roof slope up to the end of the gable end extension. As a consequence, it is an overly large and dominant addition to the property out of scale and character with the main property and properties either side on Powys Lane. While dormer windows are an established element of townscapes, and the appeal dormer is not isolated when seen in the context of other existing dormers, it has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area due its considerable size and bulk.
8. The gable end extension at the appeal site unbalances the symmetry that would have previously existed between the pair of semi-detached properties at 130 and 132 Powys Lane. In combination with the rear dormer, it also adds considerable bulk to the roof. However, the negative effect is offset to some extent by the existing stepped roof line between the two properties which breaks up the bulk of overall roof between Nos 130 and 132. The gable end extension also appears to have the benefit of a certificate of lawful proposed development. This provides a genuine fallback position in the event of this appeal being dismissed, which weighs strongly in favour of this element. Thus, I consider the gable end extension to be acceptable in these circumstances.
9. The proposed new guttering would extend the eaves by 200mm, which attempts to address one of the permitted development conditions for roof extensions in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO). However, the Council highlights technical guidance issued by the government that indicates the original eaves should be maintained or reinstated. Moreover, I am lacking evidence to demonstrate that the overall roof extension would meet the criteria for permitted development in the GPDO. Thus, while the proposed eaves alteration would have little adverse visual effect, it carries little weight in favour of the overall development.
10. In conclusion, the rear dormer causes harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it does not accord with Policy CP30 of the Enfield Core Strategy 2010-2025 or Policies DMD13 and DMD37 of the Enfield Development Management Document 2014. These policies seek to achieve high quality design in the built environment, with roof extensions that are of an appropriate size and location within the roof plane, in keeping with the character of the property, and not dominant. For dormers, Policy DMD13 seeks insets from the eaves, ridge and edges of the roof of between 500mm and 750mm, which is not the case in terms of this appeal.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR