

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2017

**by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 23 June 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/17/3173987**

**142 North Road, Hertford, SG14 2BZ**

- 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 Ms A Warrick against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
  - The application Ref 3/17/0015/HH, dated 4 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2017.
  - The development proposed is alterations to the main roof to include hip to gables, a rear roof dormer, and raising of the ridge.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed roof alterations and roof dormer on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area along North Road.

## Reasons

3. No 142 is a large detached house in extensive grounds, situated on the eastern side of North Road, almost opposite to its junction with Bramfield Road. In common with most of the houses along this part of the road, it is set well back from the front boundary. The appeal property has a complex hipped roof with a front bay and small side and front dormer windows. It has tall chimney stacks at the front and rear which are a significant and clearly visible feature, given the narrow hipped nature of the main roof. It would appear to have had a long side and rear extension constructed at some time in the past, which continue the hipped roof lines and style as used in the original house.
  4. The proposed development would involve raising the height of the roof ridge by a small amount, extending the width of the roof by means of a hip to gable alteration, and the construction of a large rear dormer with a Juliet balcony.
  5. The prevailing character of the area is one of detached two-storey houses with complex hipped roofs, including dormer windows and some small gable fronts. There is a bungalow adjacent to the north, which appears to have had a relatively recent gable-to-hip side extension on its north side. The houses to the south have a similar character and appearance to the appeal property with
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complex hipped roofs, as does the large modern house to the rear of No 142. In all of these cases, along with other hipped-roof houses in the vicinity, the roof remains a relatively subtle visual element.

6. The proposed alterations at the appeal property would result in a higher and much bulkier roof with gable ends. The house would appear top heavy, out of character with its existing appearance and the appearance of the other nearby houses. Furthermore, the extended roof would effectively obscure much of the rear chimney stacks, which are currently visible from the road. The rear dormer would occupy much of the width of the extended roof slope and would dominate the rear elevation of the house. In addition, the full height windows and Juliet balcony of the dormer would be significantly out of character and alignment with the windows in the first floor beneath.
7. The appellant contends that the hip-to-gable alterations and rear dormer would normally be considered permitted development. However, this would only apply in the event that there was no increase in roof height and it is, therefore, not a consideration in this case. The appellant also notes an authorisation relating to a hip-to-gable alteration at a house nearby. In this case, however, it would appear that the authorisation related to a Certificate of Lawful Development, where the proposal would meet permitted development criteria. Finally, the appellant contends that the tall hedge at the front boundary of the property restricts the visibility of the house. This may be so, but the roof is still clearly visible from the road and especially from the junction of North Road with Bramfield Road, where it is prominent.
8. On the basis of the above, I find that the proposal would result in a dwelling with a significant top heavy appearance, due to the increase in height and scale of the roof. In addition, the proposed rear dormer would be over dominant with regard to the rear elevation, and it would not respect the window style and size in the rear elevation of the main house. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area along North Road. It would conflict with Policies ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6 of the Council's Local Plan Second Review, which require new development, including extensions and dormer windows, to reflect local distinctiveness and to be appropriate to the design, scale and character of the original building and its surroundings.

*J D Westbrook*

INSPECTOR