



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2019

by M Heron BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/19/3232549

8 Southbury Avenue, Enfield EN1 1RL

- 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 Christos Viglas against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 19/00703/HOU, dated 21 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a double storey and single storey side extension with rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion to the existing family dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. A Certificate of Lawfulness¹ (CL) has been approved at No 8 for an extension to the roof at the side of the property to form a gable end with a rear dormer, patio doors, balustrade and front rooflights. In addition, a two storey side extension has been granted at the property under application Ref. 18/04742/HOU. Both of these schemes remain extant.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Southbury Avenue is a residential street which is not within a conservation area and does not accommodate any listed buildings. It is characterised by rows of two storey, terraced, properties with projecting bay windows. Whilst there is no Article 4 Direction in this area restricting the conversion of hipped roofs to gable roofs, most end of terrace dwellings are still constructed under hipped roofs. The common architectural design of properties in this part of the street gives them a strong sense of rhythm and uniformity.
5. No 8 is located at the end of a row of three terraced properties which are set closer to the carriageway compared to properties immediately to the north. Although this makes No 8 more visually prominent in the streetscene, its overall design, including its hipped roof, harmonises with surrounding built form.

¹ 18/04743/CEA

6. This proposal seeks planning permission for a two storey side extension to form a gabled roof with a rear dormer window. Three front roof lights are also proposed. The Council raise no objection to the extended porch or the bay window at first floor level. Having visited the site, I see no reason to conclude otherwise on these matters. I also find that the proposed rooflights would be acceptable.
7. Nevertheless, the proposed extension would result in the loss of the hipped roof. Not only would its replacement with a gabled form disrupt the balance of the terrace in which No 8 is located, but it would also appear out of character with the roofscape of this part of the street. In addition, whilst sufficiently set away from the eaves of the host property and the adjoining dwelling, the proposed rear dormer would occupy a significant proportion of the width of the roof. Moreover, its flat roof would almost project from the ridge height of the host property. Consequently, I find that the dormer would be an overly large, dominant, addition to the roof that would erode the simple design of No 8. This would reinforce the scheme's incongruous appearance.
8. A sufficient gap would be left to the side of the proposal and it would therefore not result in a 'terracing effect'. However, taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposal as a whole would be a bulky and out of proportion addition to the host property that would fail to integrate effectively with the rhythm and uniformity of surrounding properties. Given the visually prominent location of No 8, this harmful impact would be readily apparent from the streetscene, as well as from the rear gardens of some nearby properties.
9. I note that the width and depth of the proposal would be identical to the scheme granted under application Ref 18/04742/HOU. Nonetheless, this approved extension would be constructed under a hipped roof which would preserve the balance of the terrace in which No 8 is a part. It would also not include any dormer windows. Consequently, the approved scheme would not harm the character of the host property or streetscene. It is therefore not a comparable development, nor is it a reason to permit a scheme which would fail to assimilate appropriately with its surroundings.
10. I also acknowledge that the development approved under the CL would introduce a large rear box dormer window and a gabled roof form to the property. However, it would not increase the overall width of the roof. Moreover, although smaller in terms of overall height and depth, the dormer within the appeal proposal would be greater in width than that approved. The CL scheme is therefore not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Under these circumstances, I afford the identified extant schemes at No 8 only limited weight. This is so even though there is a realistic possibility that one of them would be implemented.
11. I understand that the terrace of which No 8 is a part was created when the adjoining No 6 Southbury Avenue was extended and then sub-divided to form two dwellings. However, the new end of terrace dwelling which was created has a hipped roof. This development has therefore maintained the rhythm of surrounding properties and is not a reason to set aside the above mentioned harm.

12. There is an extant Certificate of Lawfulness² at No 7 Southbury Avenue for a hip to gable extension including a rear dormer. However, this scheme would not increase the overall width of No 7 and is therefore not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. In addition, even if this permitted development was fully implemented, I find that such a gabled roof form would not be a defining characteristic of the streetscene. Consequently, this is not a reason to permit a scheme which would fail to function well or add to the quality of the area, as advocated by the Framework.
13. I also note that there are examples of large rear dormer windows in the immediate area. However, in the absence of details about how they were assessed, they carry little weight in my assessment of the appeal scheme, which I have performed based on its individual planning merits.
14. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, Policy CP30 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy and saved Policies DMD8, DMD13, DMD14 and DMD37 of the Improving Enfield Development Management Document. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that roof extensions are in keeping with the character of the host property and do not disturb the balance it shares with other properties, that proposals are appropriately located taking into account the nature of the surrounding area and that they make a positive contribution to the streetscape and the character of the built environment. The proposal would also conflict with the environmental objectives of the Framework insofar as it would not contribute to protecting or enhancing the built environment.

Other Matters

15. I accept that the proposal would improve the living conditions for the existing occupants. However, these personal benefits are not a justification for permitting a permanent alteration to the building which I have found to be harmful to the streetscene.
16. The proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbours. Nevertheless, this is a requirement of the development plan and does not diminish the harmful effects of the extension on the appearance of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations which outweigh this conflict. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Heron

INSPECTOR

² 19/00984/CEA