



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2019 by C Brennan BAE (Hons) M.PLAN

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3234674

84 Harpenden Road, Wanstead, London E12 5HN

- 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 Michael Moraise against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1989/19, dated 8 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2019.
 - The development is raising of roof ridge and dormer flat roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site, the surrounding area and the Aldersbrook Conservation Area.

Procedural Matters

4. For clarity and precision, the description of the development set out above has been taken from the decision notice and appeal form rather than the application form.
5. The Council considered the application retrospectively and, from my site visit, it is clear that the roof ridge has been raised and a rear dormer built. However the dormer on site differs from that shown on the plans, and described by the appellant in their submission, as it fails to maintain a 1m gap to the boundary with No 82. In addition the three rooflights on the front roof slope differ from those shown on the drawings. I have based my assessment on the development shown on the plans.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site comprises a two-storey mid-terrace dwellinghouse on the southern side of Harpenden Road. The appeal site forms part of a terrace of houses comprising Nos. 80-94. Properties within the terrace, and more generally along the road, are characterised by their brick facades, front
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porches, two-storey bay features, consistent design and decorative detailing. The appeal site lies within the Aldersbrook Conservation Area, whose significance is largely derived from the uniformity provided by the above features.

7. During my site visit, I observed that the roof ridge of the appeal property was clearly set above the ridges of other properties in the terrace. Due to this, the appeal property has a prominent and incongruous appearance relative to the adjoining properties and therefore detracts from the consistency of the terrace.
8. While the raised roof ridge is less obvious when standing on the pavement directly in front of the appeal site, it is clearly evident when standing on the opposite side of the road. Also, although the turret-style roof feature does obscure the raised roof within long views to the west, it becomes more visible when approaching closer to the site. Furthermore, the raised roof ridge is readily apparent when approaching from the east. As such, the raised roof ridge is prominent within public views and undermines the cohesion of the terrace.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to other examples of raised roofs in the area and asserts that these now form part of the character of the streetscene. However, the raised roof results in the loss of an unbroken ridge across the particular terrace of Nos. 80-94. As the significance of the Conservation Area is based upon the consistency of its terraces, the development therefore detracts from the character of the street.
10. At the rear, the flat roof dormer is set marginally below the extended roof ridge of the appeal property and is clearly higher than the flat roof of the adjacent dormer at No. 82 to the west. Due to its position on the raised roof ridge, the height of the rear dormer results in an incongruous and obtrusive addition within the rear roofslope of the appeal building.
11. The appellant states that views of the rear dormer are only possible from a limited number of properties and not from the public realm. However, despite the rear return projection, it is considered that the rear dormer is plainly visible from adjoining properties and from a number of properties fronting Dover Road to the south.
12. The appellant also suggests that dormers of similar size and varying design can be found in the area. Regardless, as the flat roof of the dormer is set above the ridges of adjoining properties, it is considered that the height of the dormer appears particularly dominant within the rear roofslope and in relation to adjoining properties.
13. The appellant states that while the flat roof dormer is not set down from the extended ridge by 0.5m as per the Householder Design Guide, it is set back from the eaves and side boundary by 1m and is therefore otherwise compliant. However, the Guide also states that dormers should respect the original building. As the dormer sits within the raised roof ridge, it therefore cannot be considered to be a proportionate or subordinate addition to the original building.
14. As such, overall, it is considered that the development relates poorly to the proportions of the original dwellinghouse and undermines the consistency of the terrace.

15. As such, for the above reasons, I conclude that the development causes harm to the character and appearance of the site, the surrounding area and the Aldersbrook Conservation Area. The development therefore conflicts with Policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 (2018), which respectively state that development should conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets and that extensions should complement the character of the existing building.
16. Although the harm to the significance of the Aldersbrook Conservation Area is less than substantial, there are no public benefits that outweigh that harm. As such, the development also conflicts with Policy LP33 of the Local Plan, which states that the Council will resist development that would result in harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless public benefits that outweigh the harm can be demonstrated.

Other Matters

17. In their statement, the appellant suggests that the building contractor could have achieved an internal floor-to-ceiling height of only 1.9m if the loft conversion had been built as per the drawings approved under application Ref 3540/18. However, no evidence is provided to demonstrate that this would have been the case, and indeed many other loft conversions nearby have been undertaken without raising the ridge, suggesting it is possible to achieve a sufficient headroom in these properties without raising the ridge. Regardless, this would not provide sufficient justification for the development, which harms the appearance of the appeal property, the terrace and the Conservation Area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

18. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Brennan

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR