
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Chris Houlst BA(Hons) BPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/19/3240605

57 Woodland Way, Theydon Bois, Epping, CM16 7DY

- 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 John Bennett against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref PL/EPF/2102/19, dated 24 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable roof alteration to accommodate the rear box dormer permitted under EPF/0608/19.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a hip to gable roof alteration to accommodate the rear box dormer permitted under EPF/0608/19 at 57 Woodland Way, Theydon Bois, Epping, CM16 7DY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/EPF/2102/19, dated 24 August 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2830/EX00, 2830/EX02 and 2830/PR02.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the proposed development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

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

Procedural Matters

3. The description of the proposed development has been taken from the appeal form rather than the application form as it is a more up-to-date and accurate description of the proposal shown on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located in a residential street largely comprised of other semi-detached properties that are similar in appearance. Many of these properties have side extensions and loft conversions with hipped roofs being the prevalent roof form of varying degrees of slope. While there is a degree of uniformity to the architectural form of properties along the road, with gabled double bays positioned close together on pairs of dwellings, equally there is wide variety in side extension treatments, including roof forms. The proposal would alter the existing hipped roof to a gable roof form to allow for the construction of a box dormer to the rear, which has previously been granted a certificate of lawfulness by the Council.
6. The addition of the proposed roof form would not be symmetrical with the attached neighbouring property, No. 59 Woodland Way. However the side projection over the garage of No.59 currently has a shallow pitched roof which does not match that of the appeal property. Therefore the two dwellings are not currently symmetrical and the proposed development to change the roof form would not disrupt any perceived existing symmetry between these dwellings. Many of the other pairs of semi-detached properties or properties either side of a gap along Woodland Way are also not symmetrical in nature.
7. It was noted during the site visit that there are some other dwellings on the road which have a gabled roof form and that therefore will form a constituent part of the character of the surrounding area. These include the dwellings highlighted by the appellant at Nos.37 and 39, as well as No.43 and a detached property at No.47. Therefore, although hipped roofs are considered the prevalent roof form within Woodland Way, the proposal would not be out of keeping with other dwellings within the street scene or an incongruous feature on account of the roof treatment alone.
8. The present hipped roof draws the eye to the narrow gap between the appeal dwelling and the neighbouring property at No.55. Such gaps are now a feature of the street scene given that most properties have had side extensions. However, it is not considered that a gable roof would significantly diminish an appearance of separation between the two neighbouring dwellings, given that they are viewed closely together in any event, having both had side extensions. Nor, therefore, would it further reduce the appearance of a gap to an extent which would be detrimental to either property or the overall street scene.
9. In their consultation response, the Parish Council have stated that the gable roof at No.39 Woodland Way was not consistent with other previous decisions in the area. However other examples of gables are present within the road and can be considered to be part of the variety which contributes to its character and appearance, as I have noted. Therefore this one property cannot be considered a lone anomaly. Although the proposed development would result in a larger roof than at present, it would not increase the height of the dwelling and therefore would not appear as an overly large or bulky addition. Reference has also been made to No.28 Woodland Way in which a similar extension was refused on appeal. However it is noted that this decision was some time ago, when gable roofs were not present within the street scene and therefore the two appeals, that one and the one before me, are not directly comparable.
10. For these reasons I consider that the proposed development would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and

surrounding area. Therefore it would not be in conflict with policies CP2 (iv) and DBE10 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan (1998 and 2006) or policies DM9 (D) and DM10 (E) of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version (2017). These collectively seek to ensure that new residential development enhances and complements the setting, character and townscape of the urban environment and the appearance of the street scene and existing building, whilst providing a high specification of design with matching or complementary materials. The proposal would also not conflict with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time period for commencement of the development, I have attached a condition requiring the development to accord with the approved plans, as this provides certainty and precision. A condition requiring the use of materials matching that of the existing building is also necessary to ensure an appropriate appearance for the development.

Conclusions and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is allowed.

Emma Worby

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

C M Hoult

INSPECTOR