

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Claire Searson MSc PGDip BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3242760

116 Elmcroft Avenue, Wanstead, London E11 2DB

- 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 Mrs Islam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 3117/19, dated 22 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with hip to gable alteration. Rooflights to protrude more than 150mm above roof level. Matching materials to be used on extension.
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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.

Preliminary Matter

3. Notwithstanding the description of the development, which is taken from the application form, a more precise description of the proposal is that provided in the appeal form and decision notice as 'Loft conversion with rear dormer. Hip to gable roof alteration. Three front roof lights. New window to gable end'. The Council considered the appeal on this basis and so shall I.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of No 116 Elmcroft Avenue and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a suburban residential area on Elmcroft Avenue at the corner with Florence Court. Properties within the immediate area predominantly have hipped roofs and this roof design is reflected in the appeal dwelling and the attached property. Permission is sought for a hip to gable roof extension with a dormer extension to the rear.

6. The detailed guidance within the Housing Design, Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (the SPD) notes that to convert a hipped roof to a gable-end roof will generally be refused permission where this would be out of character with the prevailing pattern of development in the area, or harm the symmetry of a pair of semi-detached properties.
7. The proposed hip to gable extension would introduce additional massing to the roof which would significantly alter its form and disrupt the distinctive symmetry with No 118 Elmcroft Avenue. This alteration would result in a substantial unbalance to the pair of semi-detached dwellings which would be readily apparent in the street scene, and particularly on the approach to the site along Lorne Gardens due to its prominent positioning at the top of the junction on Elmcroft Avenue.
8. The proposed rear dormer would have a flat roof design and would span much of the full width of the extended roof. It would be a box-like and top-heavy structure. Whilst it would be positioned to the rear, it would be highly visible in the street scene due to the site's corner position. The proposed hip to gable extension along with the rear dormer would result in an overly dominant addition to the dwelling due to their combined scale, bulk and positioning.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to an appeal decision¹ in which it was determined that the proposed hip to gable extension and rear dormer would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area or the host dwelling. Nevertheless, the appeal site is in a highly prominent location therefore the proposed alterations would be readily apparent and overly dominant from public vantage points. As such, whilst the referenced appeal decision is within close proximity to the appeal site, the context in this case differs. Furthermore, I note that appeal was determined prior to the adoption of the SPD, therefore the guidance within it was not applied to that proposal. Whilst I have taken this decision into account, I have dealt with this proposal on the basis of the circumstances of this particular site.
10. I also acknowledge that there are other examples of hip to gable extensions and dormers within the wider area and thus not all pairs of semi-detached dwellings have good symmetry. However, I have been advised that some of the local examples do not benefit from planning permission, which is required due to the removal of permitted development rights within the housing estate. In any event, those that I saw served to confirm that such extensions reduce symmetry, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
11. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area. It would therefore conflict with policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 (the LP) which seek, amongst other things, to ensure developments complement the character of the building and respect the local character of the area. It would also be contrary to the requirements of the SPD as set out above.

Other Matters

12. I have also taken into consideration that the proposal would provide additional accommodation for the appellant's family. However, these are personal

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/18/3194096

circumstances which can change over time and the development would remain long after such circumstances have ceased to be relevant. Accordingly, I do not consider that the personal circumstances in this case are sufficient to outweigh the conflict with LP policies LP26 and LP30 and the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

Hannah Ellison

Appeals Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

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

C Searson

INSPECTOR