
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 January 2021

by I A Dyer BSc (Eng) FCIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/20/3261212
159A Fox Lane, Southgate N13 4AU

- 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 Frank McBride against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 20/02337/FUL, dated 24 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a hip to gable roof extension with rear dormer; installation of 2no rooflights in the front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the site and the immediate area.

Reasons

3. 159A Fox Lane is a flat forming the upper floor of one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings facing onto Fox Lane. It lies in an area predominated by two-storey dwellings, either semi-detached or in short terraces.
4. The dwellings in the area have tiled roofs. Whilst those on the opposite side of the street have both hipped and gabled roofs, those on the same side as No 159A retain predominantly hipped roofs. These appear on the ends of both the terraces and pairs of semi-detached dwellings and provide a strong sense of symmetry and balance to the building blocks. This balance and symmetry are positive characteristics of the area within which No 159A sits.
5. The site is not within a Conservation Area and the building has no specific protected status. No 159A has a hipped roof and this is matched in form by its conjoined partner. Thus, notwithstanding minor alterations to the adjoining property, including the replacement of the roof tiles, the symmetrical roof form makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area identified above.
6. The proposal would replace the roof hip of No 159A with a gable roof extension and introduce a dormer on the rear face of the roof. In doing so, the roof of the pair of semi-detached dwellings within which the proposal lies would become unbalanced and the sense of symmetry would be undermined. Notwithstanding

- that the proposed materials for the proposal would match those used in the surrounding buildings, the proposed roof form would introduce a dominant, discordant feature, out-of-keeping with the other roof forms in the locality. This incongruity would be readily apparent to anyone passing the site on Fox Lane.
7. In view of the importance that I have placed on the balance and symmetry of the buildings in the area this incongruity, together with its visibility from the public realm, would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the site and the immediate area.
 8. Whilst the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (the GPDO) allows roof extensions under certain circumstances, the original dwelling has been subdivided to form flats and no longer qualifies for such development. The provisions of the GPDO do not, therefore, present a realistic fallback situation in this case.
 9. The appellant has brought several hip-to gable roof forms to my attention. I have limited information regarding the planning history of these, and whether they occurred under the current development plan. Further, they are, in some cases, reflected in the roof form on the opposite end of the building block. Their presence does not, of itself, justify further harm to the character and appearance of the area and I have, in any case, determined this appeal on its own merits.
 10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The proposal would thus be contrary to Policies 7.1, 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan (2016), Policy CP30 of the Enfield Council Core Strategy 2010-2025 (2010), and DMD13 and DMD37 of the Enfield Council Development Management Document (2014). This is because these policies seek to ensure that the design of development complements, reinforces or enhances the character and legibility of the neighbourhood, requiring, in particular, that roof extensions should be in keeping with the character of the property, and not dominant when viewed from the surrounding area, and must not disrupt the character or balance of the property or pair or group of properties of which the dwelling forms a part.
 11. For similar reasons the proposal would also be contrary to the aims of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), which seeks to achieve well-designed places.

Other Matters

12. The appellant points to the benefits of the additional space within the site. However, the proposal would not provide any additional residential units and the benefit of a larger unit in this location is limited and would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area which I have identified above.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

I Dyer

INSPECTOR