



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2021

by D Szymanski BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/20/3260930

34B Palmerston Crescent, Southgate N13 4UA

- 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 Michael Hyland against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 20/00460/FUL, dated 28 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 8 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as Loft Conversion with 4.No Front Roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant's name in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. While a different name appears on the appeal form, only the original applicant has the right of appeal, so the appeal proceeds in the name of Mr Michael Hyland.
3. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. In the Council's decision notice and the appellant's appeal form the development is described as 'Loft conversion incorporating gable end and rear dormer with roof lights to front', which more accurately reflects the development proposed. I have considered the appeal on this basis.
4. The Council's reasons for refusal refers to harm to the character and appearance of the host property. However, it and the delegated report make reference to development plan policies which include some reference to the wider area. The appellant's statement has addressed the effect of the development having regard to the surrounding area. I have had regard to this in setting out the main issue below.
5. On 2 March 2021 the London Plan (2021) was published, replacing the London Plan (2016). The Council and appellant have been given the opportunity to comment on the implications of this.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

7. The appeal site comprises part of one half of what appears to have once been a pair of semi-detached houses. The attached properties integrate substantial angular ground and first floor bay windows below a projecting roof element set within a hipped roof, having a strong degree of symmetry with No 36. It is one of a limited number in the street scene comprising matching bays positioned towards the inner party wall, designed with a lower profile hipped roof complementing the smaller less pronounced front window towards the outer side wall.
8. This part of Palmerston Crescent is strongly characterised by a variety of mostly matching or mirrored bay fronted properties. They retain much of their historic decoration and forms, below mostly pairs or terraces of gable or hipped roofs that have symmetry with the neighbouring property or the opposite end property in the terrace. To the rear the properties on the north west side of Palmerston Crescent are characterised by symmetry between pairs of buildings from matching outriggers, or in the case of Nos 36 to 26, similar two storey flat roofed projections on the outer sidewall side of the properties. Consequently, the area is characterised by a strong sense of symmetry, balance, and rhythm, to which the appeal site makes a positive contribution.
9. Changing the hip to a gable roof form and large box dormer would considerably modify the existing roof form. The height, shape, flat roof form, projecting bulk, position, proportion of the roof space the dormer would occupy, and proximity to the roof edges, would result in a highly dominant, unbalancing, and incongruent development. It would be significantly out of keeping with and harmful to the character and appearance of the host property, as well as the wider area which notwithstanding some limited exceptions is predominantly characterised by pairs and terraces with largely symmetrical roof forms. The harm from the dormer would be exacerbated by the window sizes and positions which do not reflect the size, design, and alignment of those below it.
10. While I note the prevalence of gable roof forms nearby, the significant majority are on properties with a different design and position of bay window to the appeal property and on balanced pairs or terraces of properties. Although the gap with the neighbouring No 32 is limited, the harmful reduction in symmetry would be discernible from the street frontage. The harm from the large box dormer would be highly prominent to the rear from the footway along the New River and some properties on Shapland Way.
11. A hip to gable alteration at neighbouring No 32 is one of few non-matching or mirrored groups of buildings with a large box dormer on this side of the crescent. The full details, circumstances and material considerations that lead to its approval are not before me, so a fully reasoned comparison is not possible. The development is highly discernible as unbalancing that building and not being in keeping with the character and appearance of the building or the area.
12. Providing an almost matching gable roof and dormer with No 32 to create matching imbalanced pairs would increase the number of incongruent and unbalanced roof forms. This would not result in an overall benefit to the host building, or the area and context in which the appeal site is viewed. Consequently, the presence of No 32 does not justify allowing this appeal proposal. Nos 80 to 86 are approximately 140m from the appeal site and given

the curve of the highway and intervening mature vegetation they do not contribute significantly to the visual context in which the appeal site is viewed.

13. For the reasons set out above the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would conflict with Policy CP30 of the Enfield Plan Core Strategy (2010) and Policies DMD13 and DMD37 of the Enfield Development Management Document (2014). In combination and amongst other things these policies expect development to be of a high quality that is in keeping with the character of the property, has regard to the character of its context and surroundings, and that dormers are not dominant and set in an adequate distance from the roof.

Other Matters

14. There is no specific objection raised by the Council in respect of the proposed rooflights, and based upon the evidence before me, I see no reason to disagree. The development would provide for a renewal of the roof fabric which is understood to have come to the end of its useful life and increase the amount of water-tight internal accommodation. However, these are small benefits which do not mitigate or overcome the harm I have found.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the property and the area in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal should not succeed.

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR