
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2021

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 October 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/21/3276500

168 Hatfield Road, St Albans AL1 4JD

- 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 Luca Sabini against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/21/0957, dated 31 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 May 2021.
 - The development is a proposed loft conversion with rear dormer and existing roof ridge raised.
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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 dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a mid-terrace property sited on Hatfield Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature, with some commercial outlets on the opposite side of the public highway. The proposal comprises an increase in the ridge of the roof and rear dormer window to create habitable attic accommodation.
4. I saw at my site visit that the adjoining property at 168a Hatfield has a higher ridge line, with a steeper roof pitch, and the front slope contains a small pitched dormer window; overall the roof form is considerably larger than the appeal dwelling. There are myriad roof shapes in the vicinity, of varying size, design and detailing. Within this context, to my mind the principle of altering the roof form of the appeal dwelling could be acceptable and need not appear incongruous.
5. However, I consider that incorporating the increase in roof height into the mass and bulk of the rear dormer window would not be an appropriate solution. This would result in an element that would dominate the roof of the property. It would be clearly visible from the private amenity spaces of surrounding houses, having a jarring effect by virtue of its scale and extent across the roof of the dwelling. The dormer would lack subservience to the new ridge line, and there would be no separation from the party wall no. 168a.

6. I therefore conclude that the scheme would be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling and surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994, which require development to account for the scale and character of the surroundings and be compatible with the original building. The proposal is also inconsistent with the advice the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conclusion

7. Based on my reasoning above and all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR