

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2021

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 November 2021

Appeal Reference: APP/Q5300/D/21/3277178
134 Lakenheath, London N14 4RX

- 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 B Auladin against the decision of Enfield Council.
 - The application (reference 21/00846/HOU, dated 4 March 2021) was refused by notice dated 29 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a “first floor side extension with gable end and loft conversion incorporating rear dormer”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a “first floor side extension with gable end and loft conversion incorporating rear dormer”, at 134 Lakenheath, London N14 4RX, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 21/00846/HOU, dated 4 March 2021), subject to the following conditions.
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - unnumbered Ordnance Survey site plan (1:1250);
 - drawing number 870/1 (Survey as existing);
 - drawing number 870/2 (Proposed first floor plan and elevations);
 - drawing number 870/3 (Proposed second floor, roof plan and sections).
 3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within an extensive residential suburb of London, north of Southgate. Lakenheath itself is a long road, curving back at each end to Chase Road and affording a pleasant living environment. There is a variety of houses

in the locality, with pairs of semi-detached houses predominating in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, although many properties have been altered and extended over the years.

4. Like its immediate neighbours, number 134 Lakenheath is a semi-detached house with a long garden. It is paired with number 132 and, originally, the two houses shared a large hipped roof with projecting elements on the front elevation, also hipped. Number 132 has previously been extended, however, and its main roof is now finished with a gable end. It also has a bulky "box" dormer construction on the rear slope that can be seen from the front of the house, in street views between neighbouring buildings.
5. It is now proposed to construct a side extension at first floor level, together with a new roof construction that would involve the conversion of the existing hipped roof to form a gable and the addition of a new rear dormer.
6. Planning policies are aimed at achieving good standards of architectural design. Development Plan Policies in the 'Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025' (adopted in November 2010) and the 'Improving Enfield Development Management Document' (adopted in November 2014) are especially important. Core Strategy Policy CP30 and Development Management Document Policies DMD6, DMD8, DMD11 DMD13 DMD14 and DMD37 all have a particular relevance to design considerations.
7. Similarly, policies in 'The London Plan' and national planning policies (as set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework') also continue to emphasise the importance of achieving good design. They make it plain that new development is to be well designed and sympathetic to its surroundings. The recent revisions to the 'National Planning Policy Framework') do not fundamentally affect these basic planning principles in the context of this appeal.
8. The proposed first floor extension would be added to the side of part of the existing first floor of the building. It would be located behind part of the wider front elevation, however, and would continue the line of the existing side wall at first floor level. Thus, it would have only a very limited impact on the streetscene and would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the building or its surroundings.
9. The proposed alterations at roof level are more contentious. The proposed gable construction would be unlike others in the road, while the new "box" dormer would be awkward in conjunction with the existing roof slopes.
10. Even so, it must be pointed out that the existing roof of the semi-detached pair is asymmetrical, as a result of a gable construction having previously been carried out at number 132. Thus, the proposed construction would restore some basic symmetry rather than the reverse (as alleged by the Council's notice of refusal).
11. Moreover, the alterations at number 132 have also included the construction of a bulky dormer and the addition that is now proposed would be similar. In any case, such rear dormers are now commonplace on traditional residential buildings. Indeed, they can often be constructed as "permitted development". In consequence, I am convinced that the proposed rear dormer would not be

awkward or unsatisfactory in its context and that it would not have an undue impact on the streetscene.

12. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed extensions would make a useful addition to the accommodation at number 134 Lakenheath. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan and I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted, subject to conditions.
13. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
14. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the suggestions made by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). Conditions are plainly necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained.

Roger C Shrimplin

INSPECTOR