

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2021

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 November 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/U5360/D/21/3276951

70 Powerscroft Road, Hackney, London E5 0PP

- 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 Ed Skrein against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hackney.
 - The application Ref 2021/0377, dated 8 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a mansard roof extension at 70 Powerscroft Road, Hackney, London E5 0PP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2021/0377, dated 8 February 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan and Drg Nos ES/SU - 100, ES/SU - 101, ES/SU - 102, ES/PP - 100, ES/PP - 101, and ES/PP - 102.
 - 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.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the date of the Council's decision a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework has been published. Having considered the role and content of the Framework in relation to this case, together with the submissions made by the main parties, I considered there to be no need to consult about the changes.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of 70 Powerscroft Road and the wider street scene.
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Reasons

4. Powerscroft Road is a residential street comprising predominantly semi-detached and terraced homes dating from the Victorian period, most with butterfly roofs that are concealed behind front parapets. No 70 is such an example, being a two-storey dwelling with a lower ground floor, situated at the end of a short terrace of four. The proposal would raise the outside wall adjacent to the flank elevation with No 72, and the party wall with No 68, and fill the space between with a flat roofed, mansard-style roof extension with a shallow pitched face to the front and a steeper pitch to the rear.
5. The Council's *Supplementary Planning Document - Residential Extensions and Alterations* (SPD) was approved in April 2009 and provides guidance for undertaking extensions and alterations to private dwellings within the Borough. Part 3 includes design guidelines for roof extensions and alterations, including mansard roofs. It notes that the continuity of the parapet line is an important townscape feature of early/mid Victorian streets and is typical of the street scene for large areas of Hackney. As a consequence, the SPD advises that roof extensions are not normally acceptable in those terraces where an unbroken roof line remains.
6. In this instance, the Council describe the terrace comprising the appeal property (Nos 64-70 even) as having a coherent form with an unbroken parapet at roof level. However, the terrace comprises two pairs of very different properties. Nos 64 and 66 are full three-storey height compared with the two-storey appearance of Nos 68 and 70. The two pairs differ significantly in their detailing and appearance. The parapet line which runs along all four properties has a significant step change due to the differing storey heights. Furthermore, the decorative cornice which fronts No 64 and which partially wraps around the return side elevation is missing from No 66. The terrace does not have a uniform appearance that in my view may otherwise leave it vulnerable to change at roof level.
7. In addition, my attention has been drawn to other examples of mansard-style roof extensions that exist in the immediate area. Whilst not directly part of the terrace belonging to the appeal property, some of these other examples are part of the terraced street scene along this side of Powerscroft Road, Nos 134 and 136 being two cases in point. Both of these properties have roof extensions that have broken the original roof line but neither was obvious to me from street level along Powerscroft Road. The original parapet walls were intact and only with the deliberate intention of detecting their presence was I able to see the altered roof form from some limited and much longer distance views. Occasional glimpses of only small parts of the roof extensions can be seen. In my assessment they have no significant impact upon the character or appearance of the original dwelling or the wider street scene. I saw the same to be true for other similar developments on the opposite side of Powerscroft Road and within the wider area which comprises similar age and style properties. The purpose of the SPD to create a high-quality, sustainable built environment is clear and understood. I also recognise the potential for harm from insensitive roof alterations and the need to guard against them. However, in my judgement, this is an occasion where the introduction of a roof extension would be acceptable, being consistent with many of the other

examples nearby that demonstrate how sensitive roof extensions can be successfully assimilated into an area.

8. The appeal proposal would be recessed behind the dwelling's front elevation with the parapet wall retained intact. The shallow pitch of the front roof slope would ensure that the roof addition would be out of sight from street level along Powerscroft Road. Longer distance views may reveal its presence to a degree, but in my opinion, it would not be openly detected or seen as an incongruous addition. The butterfly roof profile would be retained to the rear, in accordance with the SPD's guidance. My impression overall is that the proposal would have no detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of No 70, the terrace, or the wider street scene. As such, I am satisfied that the proposal would display the design quality that is required by Policy LP1 of the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (HLP) (adopted July 2020) in order for it to respond positively to local character and context, and with Policy D3 of The London Plan 2021 (LP 2021), which requires development to respond to the existing character of a place and to be of high quality. I can find no conflict with Policy D1 of the LP 2021 which deals with London's form, character, and capacity for growth.

Conditions

9. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. In the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to ensure that the proposal is finished with materials that would match the existing house.
10. The Council has suggested a condition requiring the provision of a swift nesting box at or close to eaves level of the development. The officer's report indicates that this is required by HLP Policy LP47 as the development has an eaves height taller than 5m. However, there is no evidence to demonstrate how the eaves of the existing building would be altered. In these circumstances I am not persuaded that the imposition of such a condition would satisfy the tests within the Framework and *Planning Practice Guidance* as being either relevant to the development permitted or reasonable.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, and in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR