



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 December 2021

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 February 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/21/3283918
29 Ambrose Avenue, London NW11 9AP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal of an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Flax against the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 21/3398/HSE dated 18 June 2021 was refused on the 16 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is formation of front dormer to existing loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. It has been extended and altered from its original form, including a hip to gable end roof alteration and rear dormer. The other half of the semi-detached pair retains its original hipped roof form but has a single front flat-roofed dormer.
4. Ambrose Avenue is characterised by similar pairs of semi-detached dwellings which are located quite close to the road forming a relatively continuous built frontage.
5. The proposed front dormer would be about twice the width of that on the adjoining attached dwelling and would occupy around two-thirds of the width of the enlarged roof of the appeal property. In addition, it would sit just above eaves level and extend almost up to the height of the roof and its gable edge.
6. The Council's Residential Design Guidance, 2016 (SPD) seeks to ensure that extensions respect the original building and its proportions and are not overly dominant. In respect of dormer extensions, it states that these should be sympathetic to the roof form, and generally not more than half the width and depth of the original.
7. The proposed dormer would not meet the guidance in the SPD and, in my view, would be overly large and out of proportion with the host dwelling, even in the context of the extended roof form. Furthermore, the proposed dormer would be unduly dominant given its size in relation to the roofslope.

8. The existing front dormer on the adjoining property is also somewhat larger than recommended by the SPD guidance, extending to a greater depth than that recommended. However, it is of much smaller width than that now proposed on the appeal property. The proposed dormer on the appeal property, at around twice the size, would, thereby, also have an unbalancing effect on the front elevation of the semi-detached pair, resulting in a 'top heavy' appearance.
9. Whilst on the site visit I noted that there are large flat roofed dormers visible on the rear roofslope of a small number of nearby dwellings; others, such as that on the appeal property, are not readily visible. The majority of dormers that are located on the more prominent front roof slopes are smaller and generally proportionate to the roof slope on which they are located. However, in any event, these are not predominant characteristics of the street scene of Ambrose Avenue and therefore the proposed dormer would appear incongruous in this context.
10. I find that the proposal would fail to complement the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene. As such it would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Core Strategy (2012) (CS), Policy DM01 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2012) (DMP) and Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021)(LP) which seek to ensure that development is of the highest standard of urban design to create accessible, safe and attractive environments, that respects local context and distinctive local character. It would also satisfy the Council's Residential Design Guidance SPD (2016) which in general terms seeks to ensure that development respects the character of the street scene and is complementary to the host property.
11. The Appellant has provided evidence of various dormer extensions within the wider area, mainly along Garrick Avenue which runs parallel with Ambrose Avenue. The circumstances in which these various dormers were permitted is unclear but the Council states that the majority have either been in situ for some time or were not the subject of any planning permission. As such they would not have been subject to the current policy context. In addition, as indicated above, there are few properties along Ambrose Avenue with front dormers. Whilst these include one which is not dissimilar in size to that now proposed, that does not provide justification for allowing what I have found to be a harmful addition, contrary to current policy and guidance.
12. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

P Jarvis

INSPECTOR