



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2021 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/21/3276026

12 Merivale Road, London, SW15 2NW

- 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 James Hope against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2021/0365, dated 27 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with raised ridge, rear dormer and dormer extension over part of rear outrigger.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The proposed extension had already been constructed at the time of my site visit. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey terraced dwelling located in Merivale Road. The road is comprised of terraced properties, built to a similar design, some of which have been previously extended with rear dormers. The uniformity in the design and appearance of the properties defines the character of the area and creates a coherent street scene.
 6. The rear dormer spans the width of the roof slope and is of a significant height with a vertical face which protrudes above the original ridge of the roof. This makes the dormer partly visible from the street. The excessive height of the vertical face disrupts the uniformity of the ridge line of the terrace and appears as a visually jarring addition to the property. Consequently, due to its excessive height and width, the dormer dominates the roof slope and is a bulky
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and obtrusive addition to the property which fails to harmonise with its surroundings and therefore is detrimental to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

7. Furthermore, the rear dormer does not comply with the guidance in the Supplementary Planning Document Housing (November 2016) (SPD), which states that vertical steps at the ridge should be avoided.
8. I note that the rear dormers at the adjacent dwelling at No 10 along with Nos 2 and 4 also have a vertical step at the ridge. However, it has been stated that the dormers at Nos 2 and 10 do not have planning permission. Notwithstanding this, the dormer at No 4 has been constructed with a vertical upstand that appears to be partly set down at the sides which lessens the visual impact of the upstand, while the dormers and resultant vertical upstands at Nos 2 and 10 do not span the width of their respective roofs. Consequently, these existing examples are not directly comparable to the proposal before me. Moreover, though I note the existence of these other dormers they are the exception and not the rule and I do not consider that they are characteristic of the area. As such, I do not consider that these examples justify the appeal proposal.
9. My attention has been drawn to two appeal decisions that were allowed in a neighbouring London Borough. The appeal at 2A Mandrell Road¹, London, was for the demolition of existing warehouses and the erection of terraces of four 4 bed dwellings. The new dwellings would include rear dormers that were set below the ridge line. The appeal at 18b Margate Road², London, was for a rear roof extension which would extend across almost the full width of the house and above the roof of an existing outrigger, however there is no mention of a vertical upstand above the roof ridge. Moreover, I cannot be certain that the street scenes or contexts of these other sites is similar to appeal site and street scene. As such, these previous appeal proposals are not directly comparable to the scheme before me. In any case, this appeal has been determined on its own merits.
10. For these reasons, the rear dormer and increase in ridge height causes significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies DMS1 and DMH5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (March 2016). These policies require development to integrate with its surroundings and contribute positively to local character and for extensions to buildings to not dominate the original building and to not harm the street scene or the building's appearance. The proposal also fails to comply with the guidance of the SPD for roof extensions, which seeks to protect the character and appearance of the house and the area.

Other matters

11. A Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Development has been granted at the appeal site for an amended roof extension³. This extension would have a similar rear projection to the appeal proposal but it would be set down below the original ridge line of the roof. As such the approved scheme would not be an obtrusive feature when viewed from the street and consequently would not

¹ Appeal ref. APP/N5660/A/13/2207274

² Appeal ref. APP/N5660/W/17/3182918

³ Certificate of Lawfulness application ref. 2021/2637

harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the wider area. For this reason, the presence of this fallback option does not justify the appeal proposal before me.

12. The SPD states that rear roof extensions between exposed party walls in the roof are best finished with an outward facing mansard-style roof and that roof extensions should extend over only 50% of the length of the back addition. However, it is further stated that these points would help to protect the effect of a roof extension on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. In this case the Council has not raised any concern regarding the living conditions of the neighbours and based on the evidence before me I have no reason to disagree. Nevertheless, this does not mitigate the harm that has been identified above.
13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed because of the conflict with the development plan and there being no material considerations which indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and, on that basis, I agree with the recommendation and shall dismiss the appeal.

L J O'Brien

INSPECTOR