
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 July 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/22/3293139
63 Amberley Road, Southgate, N13 4BH

- 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 Lee against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 21/04203/HOU, dated 8 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 December 2021.
 - The development proposed was described as "*demolition of conservatory and car port, construction of a single storey side and rear extension, hip to gable loft conversion, update of the façade of the host dwelling, and construction of new wall on driveway*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The Council had no objection in principle to the proposed single-storey side and rear extension or to the construction of a new wall on the property's driveway. I have no reason to disagree. The main issue therefore is the effect of the proposed hip-to-gable change and rear dormer window on the character and appearance of 63 Amberley Road and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, end-of-terrace dwelling located within a residential neighbourhood comprising properties of broadly similar age and style. The proposal comprises a number of elements including a hip to gable change to the dwelling's existing roof profile and a dormer window to the rear elevation to facilitate a loft conversion.
4. Policy DMD 13 of the Council's Development Management Document (DMD), adopted in 2014, deals with roof extensions. It states that roof extensions must be of an appropriate size and location within the roof plane and that roof dormers must be inset from the eaves, ridge, and edges of the roof, with insets normally between 500-750mm. They must also be in keeping with the character of the property and not dominant when viewed from the surroundings. The policy also requires that roof extensions to the side of a

property must not disrupt the character or balance of the property or pair or group of properties of which the dwelling forms a part.

5. The short terrace of five dwellings, which the appeal property forms part (Nos 55-63 odd), is not symmetrical. The hipped roof form of No 63 is not reflected by No 55 at the opposite end which has a gabled flank wall. Furthermore, gabled roofs feature prominently within the street scene along Amberley Road and the immediately surrounding area. No 63 currently has a hipped roof with a stepped ridge line due to a slightly subservient and narrow two-storey side extension that appears as a fully integrated part of the existing dwelling. The introduction of gabled ends to the side of the original building, and to the extension, would undeniably alter the existing roof profile but in my assessment this change would not unacceptably disrupt the character or balance of the property or terrace, given the context of its surroundings.
6. The proposed rear dormer would span virtually the full width of the original property and would be dependent upon the hip-to-gable change in order to accommodate its size. I therefore do not agree with the appellant's view that it would be contained within the context of the roofscape associated with the original dwelling. Although it would appear to be reasonably set in from both sides of the extended roof, according to undisputed figures given by the Council it would be just 130mm above the eaves and just 50mm down from the ridge when taking account of the solar panels that are proposed to be installed on its flat roof. I do not share the appellant's view that it would be subservient both physically and visually. On the contrary, it would be seen as a dominant addition that would significantly change the roof profile and character of the dwelling, and one which would be clearly viewed from the rear gardens and outlooks from surrounding properties. Its intrusive form would be exaggerated further through the proposed use at an elevated and prominent level of contrasting cedar cladding that would be set against the backdrop of traditional natural slate, and the almost floor to ceiling glazing which would show little correlation with the fenestration pattern below at first floor level. As such, I find that there would be clear conflict with Policy DMD 13.
7. I observed during my visit that Nos 59, 57 and 55 within the terrace all have large, 'box-like' dormers to their rear roof slopes. These all give the impression of a second storey to these dwellings. I also accept that there are other examples nearby of large rear dormer extensions. Nevertheless, my overall impression was that such additions were by far the minority in the locality rather than the norm and that they were not so prolific to have changed the overriding cohesive architectural character of Amberley Road and the immediate surroundings. Furthermore, I have no specific details of the planning history to any other properties in terms of either relevant policies that may have been in place at the time of granting planning permission, or even if planning permission would have been required. Regardless, the examples I saw on the other properties within the terrace served to demonstrate to me the harm that can be caused by insensitive extensions.
8. The development at 106A Fox Lane, which has been drawn to my attention, is a stand-alone redevelopment that has nothing in common with the appeal proposal which is for extensions to an existing dwelling.

9. Overall, for the reasons given, I find that due to the size and appearance of the rear dormer, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of 63 Amberley Road and the wider area. I have identified clear conflict with Policy DMD 13 of the current DMD. By failing to achieve a high-quality design and appropriate regard to its surroundings, the proposed dormer would also conflict with DMD Policies DMD 6, DMD 8 and DMD 37, Core Policy 30 of the Council's Core Strategy 2010, and Policy D4 of The London Plan 2021. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) objectives for achieving well-designed places.
10. Paragraph 2 of the Framework states that planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The developments nearby and within the wider area that have been put to me do not lend sufficient weight in favour of the proposal to outweigh the harms that I have identified and the conflicts with local and national policy.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of 63 Amberley Road and the wider area. I have noted the appellant's desire to expand their living space to accommodate their family's requirements, including the need to work from home, but neither this, nor any other matters raised, alters my conclusion that the appeal should fail.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR