



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 August 2022

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N1920/W/22/3295629

100 Torrington Drive, Potters Bar EN6 5HT

- 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 Nicholas Stidolph against the decision of Hertsmere Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/0114/HSE, dated 22 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is hip-to-gable roof extension to enable a loft conversion with rear box dormer.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for hip-to-gable roof extension to enable a loft conversion with rear box dormer at 100 Torrington Drive, Potters Bar EN6 5HT in accordance with the terms of the application, 22/0114/HSE, dated 22 January 2022, and the plans submitted with it.

Preliminary Matter

2. I saw on my site visit that the gable roof extension and rear box dormer have been constructed and I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The second part of the Council's decision notice refers to a raised patio and its effect on the privacy of the rear garden and habitable rooms of the neighbour at No.102 Torrington Drive. The construction of a raised patio is neither described on the planning application form or shown on the proposed drawings. It does not therefore form part of the appeal proposal before me, or my consideration here.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed hip to gable roof extension on the character and appearance of the host house and area.

Reasons

5. No.100 Torrington Drive (No.100) is a two-storey semi-detached house finished in red brick with front bay windows, located on the southern side of Torrington Drive. Torrington Drive is characterised by similar semi-detached houses, typically with hipped roofs. The appeal proposal is for a hip to gable roof extension to enable a bedroom and bathroom to be accommodated in the roof space.

6. I saw on my site visit that Torrington Drive retains an overall uniformity or rhythm of development, which is, in part, derived from the spacing between houses and hipped roof forms which leaves a 'sky gap' between houses and views through to rear gardens beyond. However, I also observed that many houses have been altered or extended over the years, notably to the side and there are other examples of hip to gable extensions, including Nos.90 and 94 Torrington Drive referred to by the appellant.
7. The guidance in the Council's *Planning and Design Guide, Part E: Guidance for Residential Extensions and Alterations (2006)* (PDG) is that the conversion of a sloped hip-end roof into a gable end roof will normally be refused, but any assessment will take into account the impact of the extension on the streetscene and character of the property. The hip to gable extension to No.100 continues the original ridge and extends the width of the house close to its common boundary with its non-adjointed neighbour at No.102 Torrington Drive (No.102). This reduces the sky or visual gap between No.100 and its neighbour and because of the slope in the road (No.102 being around 1m lower than No.100) the end of the gable is visible above the hipped roof of No.102. However, the spacing between houses and extent of the 'sky gap' does vary between houses on Torrington Drive and the gable extension does not entirely erode the characteristic gap. Further, although visible travelling east to west, I did not find the end gable to appear particularly prominent nor an unsympathetic addition, and it does not harm the overall uniformity and rhythm of development on Torrington Drive described above.
8. No.98 Torrington Drive (No.98), the adjoined neighbour, has been extended and has a similar front porch and garage conversion to No.100 but has also been extended to the side, with the first-floor extension set well back from the front elevation. This, in combination with the very different fenestration details (style and colour), means that any original symmetry between the semi-detached pair has already been largely lost. Whilst the gable inevitably increases the bulk of the roof form of No.100, I did not find that it further unbalances the semi-detached pair such that it causes harm to its character and appearance, or that of the streetscene.
9. Consequently, taking into account the impact of the extension on the host house and streetscene, in this case, there would be no conflict with the PDG guidance. Further, there would be no conflict the guidance at paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, or policies CS22 of the Hertsmere Core Strategy (2013) and SADM 30 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) which together require high quality design, that improves the quality of an area and complements local character.

Conditions

10. The Council does not suggest any conditions and I agree that because the development has been completed none are necessary.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR