



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/22/3295412

19 Mulberry Way, South Woodford, London, E18 1EB

- 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 Ms N Tranmer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0269/22, dated 26 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion/renovation comprising a rear flat roof dormer and 2 No bay window dormers to the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion/renovation comprising a rear flat roof dormer and 2 No bay window dormers to the front elevation at 19 Mulberry Way, South Woodford, London, E18 1EB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 0269/22, dated 26 January 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drg Nos 202105 - P1.01, 202105 - P1.02, 202105 - P1.03, 202105 - P1.04, 202105 - P1.05, 202105 - P1.06 and 202105 - P1.07.
 - 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.

Procedural Matter

2. I have noted a slight change in the way the appellant's name is spelt between the application form and the appeal form. I have recorded the name as shown on the appeal form as this is consistent with how it has been spelt on other documents. I am satisfied that this is a simple typographical error and that the applicant and the appellant are one and the same person.

Main Issue

3. The Council has raised no specific concern with regard to the rear dormer window. I have no reason to disagree with these findings. Therefore, the main

issue in this case is the effect of the proposed front dormers on the character and appearance of 19 Mulberry Way and the wider street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located along a predominantly residential street as it extends in a broadly easterly direction away from the appeal site but at a point where the character of the area markedly changes to more commercially mixed uses to the west, including a recent and contemporary designed part three-storey building opposite at Nos 10-14, which itself lies adjacent to an open public car park. Moreover, whilst the houses immediately neighbouring No 19 are of similar age, size and design, they are not all identical, with modifications to some including front dormer windows at No 21 (attached to No 19) and at No 25. Furthermore, the dwelling styles more widely within the street scene are varied. I could detect no particular prevailing character to the roofscape with a mix of forward facing hipped and gabled roof designs and dormers occasionally featuring along parts of Mulberry Way. To my mind, any uniformity of the street scene is derived more from the straight alignment of the road and the enclosed vista along it owing to the regular and shallow building lines of the properties to each side, rather than from any consistent architectural style or regimentation in form. As such, when seen in the round, I do not consider the street scene in general to be overly sensitive to sympathetic change at roof level.
5. The appeal proposal would include two bay-fronted dormer windows. These would be symmetrically arranged and would sit directly above similar bay windows at ground floor level, designed with the express intention of aligning and mirroring their form. I recognise that Nos 19 and 21 were once a symmetrical pair, but any importance to this has been lost through roof modifications to No 21. Furthermore, symmetry between neighbouring properties, even when attached, was not a feature I detected as significant within the overall character of Mulberry Way.
6. Although fairly large, the dormers would be set up from the eaves, down from the ridge and in from both sides by reasonable margins in all cases. Contrary to the Council's view, I find that they would be neither bulky nor overbearing but instead would be comfortably set within the front roof slope. Through the use of materials to match the existing slate roof, I find overall that they would appear complementary to the appearance of the dwelling and merely a further contributing factor to an already mixed street scene.
7. The Council's *Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document 2019* (SPD) states that front and side dormers are generally not considered to be appropriate. However, they are not discounted as a matter of principle and in this case, for reasons given above, I find that the front dormer windows would not harm the character or appearance of the appeal property or the prevailing mixed character of the wider street scene. There would therefore be no conflict with the aims or objectives of the SPD or with Policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030, adopted in 2018, insofar as they require the design of development, including household extensions, to be high quality, respectful and complementary to an existing building and an area's character.

Conditions

8. 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 to match the existing.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given, I find that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of 19 Mulberry Way or to the wider street scene. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR