



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2023

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/22/3310116

7 Bourne Avenue, London N14 6PB

- 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 and Mrs S and C Smith against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 22/01851/HOU, dated 24 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'construction of roof extension, mainly within existing roof void with dormer to the rear elevation and conservation skylight to the side roof slope.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Meadway Conservation Area ('the CA').

Reasons

3. The Meadway Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2015 ('the CAA') notes that the planning, layout and style of the CA are influenced by the Arts and Crafts and Garden Suburbs movements. While there is diversity in the exact design, form, and roof configurations of the dwellings, they typically comprise a limited range of traditional house-types with a small palette of materials and features which are used in varying combinations. Together with the usually generous landscaped settings to the streets and buildings, this provides for an attractive spaciousness and sense of coherence which is distinctive, and which contributes positively to the character, appearance and significance of the CA.
4. The appeal site includes a semi-detached dwelling close to the junction of Bourne Avenue with The Bourne. It is part of a group of similar semi-detached properties with 'H-plan' hipped roofs including prominent front gables and hipped rear projections that incorporate deep eaves over bay windows. These features and the brick, render and tile finishes of the dwellings are common within the area, and based on my observations at my visit and the evidence before me, I agree with the CAA that the dwelling contributes to the special interest of the CA.
5. The Council has not raised an objection to the rooflight which is proposed to the side of the dwelling. I am also satisfied given its position and modest size

that it would be a discreet addition that would not detract from the character or the appearance of the host dwelling or area.

6. However, Policy DMD 13 of the Development Management Document 2014 ('the DMD') states that roof extensions will only be permitted where they are an appropriate size and location within the roof plane. Although of lesser width than the host roof at the eaves, the proposed rear dormer would be wider than the main roof ridge. It would also adjoin the rear hipped projection of the host roofslope, and would be of similar height to this part of the roof. In my judgement, this relationship with the hipped projection would be somewhat awkward, and the dormer would be over-large, appearing to fill much of the main roofslope. Moreover, the glazing to the rear of the dormer would be of similar total width to the first-floor four-pane window below but partly of greater height given the inclusion of doors resulting in a larger overall extent of glazing. This would disrupt the vertical hierarchy to the dwelling, and would further exacerbate the visual impact of the dormer.
7. I acknowledge that the inset of the dormer from the boundary with the attached neighbour and from the ridge and eaves of the main roof would meet or exceed the minimums specified by Policy DMD 13, and that the external materials would be in keeping with other dormers nearby. In addition, I have not been directed to any explicit policy or guidance stating that it would be unacceptable for a dormer to adjoin an existing roof projection. Even so, I find that the above factors in combination would result in a dormer of a scale and design that would dominate the host roof to the detriment of the architectural form, character and appearance of the building.
8. The dormer would not be appreciable from Bourne Avenue. However, I saw that the appeal dwelling's roof is clearly visible from The Bourne. The dormer would also be readily apparent in these views, and I cannot therefore agree with the appellant that the dormer would not be visible from any street or public viewpoints. It would also be clearly visible from neighbouring properties and gardens. In these views, the development would be a conspicuous and unsympathetic feature that would detract from the character and the appearance of the host dwelling and of the CA.
9. There are rear dormers to some nearby properties. However, those to 9, 11 and 13 Bourne Avenue are of notably lesser width than the dormer before me, and do not adjoin the hipped projections of the host dwellings. In addition, they do not include full height glazing. Accordingly, they are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal which I have considered on its own merits.
10. There is a statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Meadway CA. For the reasons above, I find that the development would harm the character and the appearance of the host dwelling and that it would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA to the detriment of its significance. In the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'), I find that the harm would be less than substantial given the scale of the development and the localised nature of the effect. Nevertheless, the Framework states that heritage assets which include conservation areas are irreplaceable, and the harm to the CA attracts considerable importance and weight.

11. The proposal would make efficient use of the site without increasing the dwelling's footprint, but there would be only a modest increase in living accommodation, and this would offer a mainly private benefit for the occupiers. No firm details demonstrating the effect of the conversion of the roofspace on energy consumption of the building as a whole have been provided, and I consider that any benefit would be likely to be limited. Furthermore, there is no compelling evidence before me to show that conversion of the roofspace to provide additional accommodation would be dependent on a dormer of the scale and design proposed by the appeal. Even taken together, I find that the public benefits of the proposal are insufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of the CA.
12. Overall, I conclude that the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and the appearance of both the host dwelling and the Meadway CA. The Council's reason for refusal refers to Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021, Core Policy 30 and Core Policy 31 of the Core Strategy 2010, and Policies DMD 6, DMD 8, DMD 13, DMD 37 and DMD 44 of the DMP. I note that many of the provisions within these policies are either not relevant to the proposal, or would be complied with. Nevertheless, the proposal would conflict with these policies insofar as they include requirements which together broadly seek high quality development of appropriate scale and form that responds positively to existing character and local distinctiveness; the preservation and enhancement of heritage assets; and roof extensions of appropriate size and location. It would also be contrary to guidance within the Meadway Conservation Area Management Proposals 2015 advising that over-large or poorly designed extensions can damage the appearance of the houses and the grain and character of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan should be reached.
14. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Bowyer

INSPECTOR