



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2023

by D Wilson BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K1935/D/23/3316746

67 Siddons Road, Stevenage, Herts SG2 0PW

- 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 Neils Hammond-Quaye against the decision of Stevenage Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01001/FPH, dated 8 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is a raised roof and enlarged rear dormer projection.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council submitted comments on the appellants statement of case during the consideration of the appeal, which the appellant has had the opportunity to respond to and has provided an updated statement. The comments made relate to an earlier version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) being referred to, Policies in the London Plan being referred to, comments on whether the proposal would be visible in the street scene and comments in relation to works nearby. As the appellant has had the opportunity to respond with an updated statement and the points are mostly to provide clarity, I do not consider that interested parties would be prejudiced if I take these amended statements into account and I shall therefore determine the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. 67 Siddons Road (No 67) is a two-storey terraced house located in a dense residential area. Siddons Road gradually rises, and the terraced houses rise with it which results in the roofs and frontages being staggered creating a rhythm which gives the area a distinctive character and appearance.
5. The proposed raising of the roof would erode this character and result in a house that is the same height as the neighbouring house at 69 Siddons Road. This would be particularly prominent due to No 67's frontage remaining to be staggered from those adjoining. Consequently, the house would stand out as a dominant feature on the street scene which would harm the architectural form

of the host dwelling as well as erode the rhythm of the other rooflines and frontages in the area.

6. There is an existing dormer to the rear of the property which extends almost the full width of the roof. The proposal seeks to increase the height of the dormer to match the proposed increase in height to the ridge as well as extend the width of the dormer to occupy the full width of the property.
7. The Council's Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Adopted October 2009 (SPD) provides guidance on roof extensions. The guidance suggests that extensions should not extend over more than half of the roof slope, raising of the ridge height to accommodate a loft conversion will not normally be considered acceptable and proposals must not threaten the integrity of the group of terraced houses or street scene and should be designed with a pitched roof. In this regard, the proposal is contrary to the guidance contained within the SPD.
8. There are no other dormers on the row of terraces of which the appeal dwelling forms part and as such it already stands out in the street scene. The proposal to increase its height and width would make it even more prominent. The dormer can in part be seen from Siddons Road and its increase in height would further exacerbate the change in the roof line and architectural form to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area. The dormer would be visible from Ferrier Road and Bronte Paths and due to there being no other dormers on the roofscape and the dormers overall width and height, the proposal would result in a dominant, bulky and uncharacteristic feature.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policies GD1 and SP8 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 Adopted 22 May 2019 which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure development respect and makes a positive contribution to its location and surrounds as well as deliver substantial improvement to the image and quality of the towns built fabric. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance contained within the SPD.

Other Matters

10. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. I also acknowledge that the proposal is not a listed building, nor is it located within a conservation area. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm identified.
11. The appellant has referred to several examples of rooflines in the area that are different in order to support the proposal. I do not have full details in respect of such examples so I cannot be sure of the circumstances of these. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits, based on the evidence before me.
12. However, from site observations No's 59, 61 and 63 as well as 49, 51, 53, 55 and 57 Siddons Road are both rows of terraced houses which share the same rhythm in their rooflines and frontages that is characteristic of the area. Some of these houses share the same roof height, however, this is where the slope of Siddons Road flattens out and the overall height of the houses is the same as

well as their frontages being flush. This differs from the appeal proposal where there would be a visible change in the overall height of the dwelling when compared to others in the row.

13. No 34 Siddons Road is located at the end of a row of terraced houses and whilst alterations have been made the staggered roofline is still maintained. In respect of the dormer, it is not as prominent on the roofscape as the property is end terraced and it is located within a much smaller row of terraces when compared to the appeal proposal.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, having had regard to the development plan read as a whole, and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Wilson

INSPECTOR