



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2024

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3349544

160 Nimrod Road, Wandsworth, London, SW16 6TL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David Johnson against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/1695.
 - The development proposed was described as '*Increase of ridge height by 300mm*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application form, dated 10 May 2024, gave a short description of the proposed works simply referring to an increase in ridge height to the property. The form stated that works had not started although I note that a previous retrospective planning application (Ref 2024/0701) for an increase in ridge height of 450mm, with an increase in pitch of the front and rear roof slopes, was refused in April 2024. During my visit I saw the works to the roof of the appeal property that had already been carried out and which were largely completed externally. These included a raised ridge, altered pitch and a rear dormer extension. The plans before me and determined by the Council as listed on the decision notice, are annotated as '*existing*' elevations. They appear to show what I observed as built including a clear measurement to show the ridge height increased by 300mm and a rear dormer extension.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, mid-terraced dwelling within a residential neighbourhood. Nimrod Road is sloped with terraced houses of equivalent age and style to both sides that are set behind raised pedestrian walkways that run parallel to the lower level of the road and kerbside pavements. Due to the area's topography, semi-detached pairs are stepped higher in relation to the lower pair with ridge and eaves heights incrementally raised accordingly with progression along the upward slope of the road.

5. The Council's *Housing Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) was adopted in 2016. Its sub-section dealing with extensions recognises that raising the ridge of the roof in order to achieve more headroom in a loft is an increasingly common alteration. However, it explicitly advises against raising the ridge to make the pitch of the roof steeper on a terraced house where this would make the front roof slope different from its neighbours. It goes on to state that the objective is to make any alteration as unobtrusive as possible. In relation to rear roofs on mid-terraced houses, the SPD advises that a vertical face to an extension should normally be avoided as the added bulk can be intrusive. Specifically in relation to dormer windows the SPD advises that they should avoid making the house look top heavy with the appearance of another full-blown storey.
6. The works to the front roof slope at No 160 noticeably alter the pitch of the roof. This is evident when looking in both directions along Nimrod Road. When looking north, the original step change between the appeal property and No 162, which is lower down the slope, is exaggerated by not only the increased ridge height but also by the increased angle to the roof's pitch. When looking south, the original roof symmetry and common alignment of the pair at Nos 160 and 158 is broken by the raised roof and altered pitch. The change is reflective of development the SPD explicitly advises against and appears visually intrusive and disruptive to the harmony of the roofscape along the terrace.
7. The dormer to the rear spans the entire width of the property and extends up to the raised ridge height and only marginally above the eaves. Its vertically faced 'box-like' form dominates the rear roof slope appearing not as a sympathetic roof addition but as a full additional storey. This element of the works also reflects a form of development the SPD advises against. Due to the dwelling's position close to the end of the terrace where Nimrod Road meets Welham Road, the rear dormer is openly seen from the public domain as an intrusive and unsympathetic addition, and one which dwarfs the smaller proportions of the rear dormer extensions seen adjacent on Nos 162 and 164.
8. Overall, by failing to satisfactorily integrate with the surroundings or to appear sympathetic to the style of the original building, the works are contrary to Policies LP1 and LP5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038, adopted in July 2023.
9. The appellant has directed me to examples along Nimrod Road where some properties have altered their front roof slopes and increased their ridge heights. These examples were few and far between. The significant majority of dwellings along Nimrod Road maintain their original roof composition to the front and follow the prevailing pattern and rhythm of the incrementally stepped roofscape within the street scene. The Council has pointed to examples where planning permission has been granted to some properties where a raised ridge has been accommodated by maintaining the angle of the front roof pitch. In these cases, as at No 170, the change is subtle. In other cases, which according to the Council do not benefit from planning permission, it is not and the visual harm that ensues is evident. To my mind these few examples of poor development do not justify the perpetuation of further harm.
10. The appellant has alluded to the potential for agreement to an adjusted form of development. That is not a matter for consideration as part of this S78 appeal,

which is determined based on the development proposed within the original planning application and considered by the Council.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR