
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2024

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/W/24/3346276

18 York Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1RL

- 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 Brydn Webb against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref EPF/0554/24, dated 15 March 2024, was refused by notice dated 13 May 2024.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the York Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The proposal relates to the first floor flat of this semi-detached Victorian property. The property, along with its attached neighbour at No 16, is constructed from yellow stock bricks and red bricks have been used to provide detailing. Both properties contain a small front and rear dormer window with an arched head. The windows and door heads on the front elevation are also arch-topped. The main roof is hipped on both Nos 16 and 18 and appear to be constructed from concrete tiles. Both Nos 16 and 18 have extensions of varying designs to the rear. Parts of that to No 16 contain a flat roof. The property is set within the York Hill Conservation Area.
4. The proposal would result in the loss of the existing hipped side roof slope and replacement with a gable end. It is proposed to replace the existing aluminium framed windows on the first floor and in the roof dormers with new UPVC windows finished in white. A new UPVC window will be added to the side gable elevation.
5. The pair of properties at Nos 16/18 sit in a fairly prominent position, close to the junction of York Hill with Kings Green. The side elevation of No 16 is partially screened by the building to its side, although, being set further forward, No 16 is clearly visible and the roof form is obvious. No 18 is highly visible in the street-scene due to the open land immediately adjacent to it. Its roof form is readily appreciated due to the open aspect.

6. The conservation area contains buildings of a variety of styles and designs. Nos 16/18 appear to be a unique pair and the design is not repeated elsewhere within the conservation area. Notwithstanding the later additions that have been made to the pair, this makes them quite distinctive.
7. Due to the prominence of the building, I consider that the proposed side gable will have a considerable visual impact. The extension would unbalance the existing roof, when seen in conjunction with that at No 16. Due to its design and prominence, I consider that this unbalancing effect would have a negative effect on the appearance of the building. It would appear visually awkward and in marked contrast with the original hipped roof at No 16. I acknowledge that there are many designs of roofs within the area and some have gables. However, the proposal would significantly unbalance this pair of properties, notwithstanding the presence of gables elsewhere. In this way the proposal would fail to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area
8. I have taken account of the appellant's intention to use matching materials and detailing, along with the inclusion of windows which would have a better appearance than the existing aluminium ones. However, these factors would not outweigh the clear and unacceptable visual effects of the roof extension. I have also taken account of the fact that the proposal would allow the appellant to use the loft space in a more efficient manner, noting that this would be a private rather than public benefit.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation, irrespective of the level of harm. Adding that any harm should require clear and convincing justification. In the light of the advice in the Framework, I judge that the harm would amount to less than substantial harm. This needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I have considered the benefits, as set out by the appellants and in my judgement, they would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the conservation area.

Conclusion

10. As a result of my findings, the proposal is contrary to Policies DM7 and DM9 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 and there are no matters which outweigh that conflict. Consequently, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR