



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2025

by **H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/24/3354587

72 Camden Road, Chafford Hundred, Grays, RM16 6PY

- 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 Todor Dimitrov against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00185/HHA.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with raised roof height and the introduction of two dormers on rear roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the appeal was lodged a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), and further revisions, have been published. Having reviewed the changes, I am satisfied that they do not affect the substantive matters of the appeal, and that proceeding without seeking further comments from the parties would not be prejudicial to their cases.
3. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the description used on the appeal form and the Council's decision notice, as this more accurately reflects the extent of the proposal than as described on the original planning application form.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey detached house located on a modern residential development which appears cohesive as a result of its house types, detailing and materials. There are few obvious loft conversions in the vicinity, and simple unaltered pitched roofs with feature gables are characteristic. The appeal property is one of a pair of detached houses fronting Camden Road, between groups of dwellings which are positioned side on to the road. This adds to the prominence of the appeal property, exacerbated by its position next to a public path that leads to the housing beyond.
6. Land levels throughout this housing development are not uniform, and as such there is a staggered roofscape. The roof ridge line of the appeal property already appears to be slightly above that of the neighbouring house. The proposed

increase in height, and therefore the gap above the existing front gable, would make this difference more marked. In isolation, due to the varied roof line, this change would not be unduly disruptive to the street scene. However, when viewed in combination with the proposed rear dormer windows it would materially add to the bulk and visual intrusion of the dwelling.

7. The proposed rear dormer windows would project deeply from the rear roof slope, and their scale compared to the more modest windows below would give the dwelling a 'top heavy' appearance. Their size and design, with wide sections of glazing and solid walls, would appear unacceptably dominant on the dwelling, and out of keeping with the simple roof slopes of other properties in the vicinity. Due to its slightly elevated position, the rear roof slope would be particularly visible from the adjacent path and the public play area to the rear of the site. I note the appellant's view that the rear slope is not visible from any street, but the side of the dormer windows would be seen from Camden Road.
8. Policy CSTP22 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) 2015 (CS) requires development proposals to demonstrate high quality design founded on a thorough understanding of, and positive response to, the local context. This is supported by the Thurrock Design Guide Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD), which includes design guidelines for dormer windows. Section 5.4 of that document confirms that the size of the proposed alteration, the prominence of the roof slope and the character of the surrounding area will be taken into account when considering whether a proposed roof alteration is acceptable.
9. The appellant advises that the proposal falls within the SPD guidelines, which allow for dormer windows on non-street facing, visible but less prominent side or rear roof slopes. However, the guidelines indicate that modest box dormers on rear roof slopes "may" be acceptable. The siting of the appeal property is such that its rear elevation is highly visible and prominent in the public domain, and the introduction of the proposed dormers would be an incongruous addition that would be at odds with the prevailing character of the area. Although the proposal may be technically compliant with the SPD dormer size standards, the resulting development would not be a positive response to the local context, as required by CS Policy CSTP22.
10. The appellant advises that dormers on rear roof slopes have been accepted by the Council in numerous locations, but this is not evidently the case in the local area. As such, the presence of unidentified dormer windows elsewhere in the borough would not justify this proposal.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and the wider area, in conflict with the Framework requirements for development to add to the overall quality of the area and to be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment; and contrary to CS Policies CSTP22 and PMD2, which amongst other criteria requires development to contribute positively to the character of the area. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR