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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2025 by M Jones

### Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 June 2025

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### Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/25/3363484

### 34 Somerset Road, Edmonton, Enfield, London N18 1HG

- 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 Ms Christiana Young against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
  - The application Ref is 24/03847/HOU.
  - The development proposed is rear dormer and outrigger dormer with front rooflights.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for rear dormer and outrigger dormer with front rooflights at 34 Somerset Road, Edmonton, Enfield, London, N18 1HG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/03847/HOU, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
  - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be in accordance with the following approved plans: 34\_SR\_PD\_03 Rev A; 34\_SR\_PD\_04 Rev A; 34\_SR\_PD\_05 Rev A; 34\_SR\_PD\_07 Rev A all dated 9 December 2024 and PP-13553472v1.
  - 3) The external materials of the rear dormer and outrigger dormer hereby permitted shall match the style and colour of those of the roof of the appeal dwelling.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Preliminary Matters

3. The description of development on the application form referred to a retrospective application for a loft conversion with skylight window and front rooflights. However, from visiting the site, it is clear that there are discrepancies between the drawings submitted and what has been built on site. The submitted drawings show the main roof ridgeline of the appeal property as the same height as the neighbouring properties in the terrace, whereas the development as built has a raised ridge and the front roof slope has been brought forward slightly to accommodate the rear dormers. The dormers as built are the same height as the new ridge line, so are also taller than shown on the submitted drawings.

4. The Council assessed the application based on what has been built on site. However, given the difference in roof ridge height and position and the increased height of the dormers, I consider the as built development to be materially different to the submitted drawings such that it would not be possible to align the two schemes through conditions. Therefore, in the interests of clarity and fairness, and taking account of the appellant's stated preference, I have instead made my assessment based on the application and submitted plans and drawings dated 9 December 2024.
5. Therefore, I have taken the description of the proposed works in the banner heading above from the Council's decision notice, rather than the application form, as this more accurately describes the proposed scheme.

### **Main Issues**

6. The main issues are:
  - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the surrounding area;
  - the effect of the development on the living conditions of the residents at 32 Somerset Road with particular regard to outlook and light; and
  - whether any material considerations outweigh any conflict with the development plan.

### **Reasons for the Recommendation**

#### *Character and appearance*

7. The appeal dwelling is a two-storey, mid-terraced house with North Middlesex University Hospital sitting directly behind. Somerset Road is residential in character and appearance and is made up of two-storey terraced dwellings of a similar scale, design and form. This broad uniformity of appearance gives a rhythm and balance to the street. A number of dwellings on the road have been altered, for example through the use of different external materials, alterations to front porches and roofs. Roof alterations include the installation of solar panels and front roof lights and some properties have altered the front roof slope; however, in general the form and design of the roofs remain similar and the brick and tile parapets which separate each roof slope are retained. There is also evidence of other rear dormer extensions in the area.
8. The proposal would not change the front roof pitch or height and the proposed rooflights would be in keeping with existing similar alterations on the street. Overall, the proposal would have a negligible effect on the appearance of the front elevation of the appeal dwelling. Therefore, it would maintain the broadly consistent appearance of the front elevations and roofs of dwellings on the road which is a positive element of the character and appearance of the local area. Consequently, in relation to the front elevation, the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling or surrounding area.
9. The proposed dormer would create a square, box-like addition that would add significant bulk to the rear of the property. It would also result in the loss of the sloped roof of the outrigger which is an original feature of the property and replicated in neighbouring properties. Further, the proposed dormer would be built up to the side boundaries of the roof and up to the ridge and eaves with no visual

relief. The dormer would therefore appear bulky and dominant with an awkward, top-heavy visual arrangement akin to an additional storey.

10. Consequently, the proposed dormer would introduce an unsympathetic addition to the rear of the property and would therefore harm the appearance of both the appeal dwelling and the terrace. Views of the rear dormer would be limited from the public realm due to the presence of other buildings and trees but it would still be visible from neighbouring properties.
11. There is an example of a rear dormer of a similar design and form at 28 Somerset Road. Nevertheless, the remainder of the rear roofscape of the terrace is largely unbroken and the original outriggers dominate the pattern of development at the rear and create the prevailing character. In any event, the dormer at No 28 is smaller than the appeal proposal with a break in the roof line from the dormer on the main roof to the dormer on the outrigger, and with some space to the eaves and sides of the roof. Consequently, it has slightly less visual impact than the proposed development.
12. For these reasons, the rear dormer would not achieve the high-quality design and regard for local character required by local and national policy and so would be harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and surrounding area. The proposed development would not, therefore, comply with Policy CP30 of the Enfield Core Strategy (2010), Policies DMD8, DMD13 and DMD37 of the Enfield Development Management Document (2014) (DMD) and Policy D4 of the London Plan (2021) which require high-quality design that is appropriate to its context and in terms of its scale, bulk and massing.
13. The proposed development would also not be compatible with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which aims to deliver high quality design that complements local context and character.

#### *Living conditions*

14. The neighbouring property at No 32 has its own two-storey outrigger with a single storey extension behind. There is a recessed area on the ground and first floor between its outrigger and that of the appeal property. The rear windows of the ground floor extension and first floor outrigger would be largely unaffected by the proposed development in terms of light and outlook as they are positioned in line with, or further ahead of, the end of the rear dormer projection.
15. The ground floor side and rear windows in the recessed area were already significantly impacted in terms of light and outlook by the original two-storey outrigger. Given that the proposed development retains this outrigger and builds directly on top of it, these ground floor windows would continue to be significantly impacted in terms of light and outlook. Therefore, the proposed development would not make the current situation with regard to light and outlook materially worse for these windows.
16. The first-floor side and rear windows in the recessed area were also impacted by the outrigger but to a lesser extent than the ground-floor windows, given the slope and positioning of the original outrigger roof. Therefore, had the existing development not been constructed, there would still have been light reaching these windows and an outlook over the sloped roof of the outrigger. The proposed dormer would introduce walls in place of this sloped roof. This extra height and the bulky

box-like form of the dormer would make it appear dominant and overbearing and would create significant further enclosure for these first-floor windows. It would also increase overshadowing during the middle part of the day.

17. The occupants of No 32 would still have unrestricted outlook and light from the rear windows of the ground floor extension and first floor outrigger. However, the proposal would result in a significant and harmful reduction in light to and outlook from the first-floor windows of the recessed area for these occupants, to the detriment of their living conditions.
18. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the living conditions of the occupants of No 32 with respect to outlook and light. Accordingly, it would be contrary to Policy CP30 of the Core Strategy, Policies DMD8, DMD13 and DMD37 of the DMD and Policy D4 of the London Plan. These policies, among other things, aim to preserve amenity with regard to outlook, privacy and overlooking and ensure developments make a positive contribution to quality of life and are not unduly dominant or intrusive on neighbours.
19. The proposed development would also not be compatible with the Framework which aims to create places that have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

#### *Material considerations*

20. As detailed above, the development would cause harm to character and appearance as well as the living conditions of the occupants of No 32 with regard to outlook and light, and consequently would conflict with the development plan. This is a matter which I afford very substantial weight.
21. However, the appellant has stated that if the appeal is not allowed, they would construct a dormer under permitted development rights. There is therefore a greater than theoretical possibility that this development would take place as a fallback position.
22. The appellant has provided no details or drawings of the alternative dormer extension. However, from the submissions and examples of other developments that they consider were permitted development, it is evident that the dormers built under the fallback option would be very similar to the proposed development in terms of design and form. They would have to be only slightly smaller in overall volume and set away from the eaves to comply with permitted development limits.
23. Given the similarity in scale and form, I consider that the alternative dormers would cause substantially similar harm to the appeal proposal in terms of both the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the area, and the living conditions of the occupants of No 32. I therefore give this fallback position great weight, and in this case, it justifies making a decision which is not in accordance with the development plan.

#### **Conditions**

24. I recommend the standard time period for commencement of the development condition in the interests of expediency. I also recommend a condition requiring the development to accord with the approved plans as this provides certainty. I further recommend a condition requiring use of materials of matching style and colour to

the existing roof of the appeal dwelling to ensure an appropriate appearance for the development taking into account the character and appearance of the local area.

25. The proposal includes a side window in the dormer over the outrigger in a similar position to the window that has actually been built. I saw from the equivalent window that it is not possible to see into the first-floor rear window of No 32, even when opened, due to the angle between the windows and their respective positioning. The window also would not result in significantly greater overlooking of the garden of No 32 than already exists. Consequently, it is not necessary to impose a condition requiring this side window to be glazed and non-opening.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

26. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

*M Jones*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

27. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and agree with the reasoning and recommendation. On that basis the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions listed above.

*L McKay*

INSPECTOR