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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2025

by **Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 August 2025

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### **Appeal Ref. APP/P3040/D/25/3368521**

**32 Alford Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6GJ**

- 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 Andrew Golding against the decision of Rushcliffe Borough Council.
  - The application ref. is 25/00367/FUL.
  - The development proposed is described on the application form as: *"Erection of a single storey side and rear extension and erection of loft conversion including hip to gable to rear and side dormers."*
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### **Decision**

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### **Main issue**

2. The Council deemed the single-storey side and rear extension to be acceptable. I share that view. Thus, the main issue is the effect of the proposed loft conversion upon the character and visual amenities of the host building and the wider area.

### **Reasons**

3. No. 32 is situated in a row of detached 2-storey houses along the western side of Alford Road, a pleasant residential street. Like the other houses in the row between nos 2 and 42, the appeal property has brick exterior walls under a hipped main roof and has retained much of its original character. I saw that only later rear ground floor additions and alterations are in evidence at no. 32.
  4. That said, I note that planning permission was granted on appeal in October 2024 (ref. APP/P3040/D/24/3351661) for 2-storey side and single-storey rear extensions at no. 32. This permission has not been implemented and it is said for the appellant that the scheme under the current appeal is for an alternative proposal.
  5. The project now proposed would include a loft conversion based on a hip-to-gable rear roof extension and large dormers to each side of the resulting roof. The dormers would be slightly stepped back from and follow the angle of the retained hipped roof at the front before being covered by flat roofs further back.
  6. In the regular row of houses between nos 2 and 42, whilst there have been first floor or 2-storey, flat-roofed side additions to nos 10 and 30, there has been precious little change to the original roofscape, except for a side dormer at no. 18. I
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view this predominantly original and unspoilt roofscape as a valued townscape characteristic. This is because its attractive and cohesive appearance contributes positively to the area's sense of place. Whilst this would not automatically rule out physical changes at roof level to any of the houses, it seems to me that such projects ought to be approached with a degree of restraint in this local context. The appeal scheme would not exemplify such an approach.

7. Rather, the loft conversion scheme would overhaul the roofscape of the existing building so as to provide on a second floor a master bedroom, complete with en suite and dressing room. To achieve such a sizeable transformation, the cumulative scale of the roof extensions would be substantial. Combined together in the design, form and scale presented, the extensions would add considerable mass to the roofscape, creating a top-heavy, ungainly and bulky shape that would dominate and fail to integrate well with the original appearance of the host dwelling.
8. The large flat-roofed side dormers would appear to merge together, obliterating the central roof ridge and occupying a large part of the depth of the resulting main roof and virtually all of its width. As they would be only fractionally set back from the front hipped roof, the eaves and the new rear gable end, this would not have any perceptible effect in reducing the bulk or visual spread of the development across the roofscape. Such a sizeable flat-topped roof would not match or harmonize with any of the roofs of the original property. It would appear incongruous and architecturally contrived with the aim of forcing the roof down so as to accommodate the second floor plan as proposed. The end result would also be to make the front hipped roof ridges appear far less distinct.
9. Despite the use of matching tiles, the proposed loft conversion would not represent a visually attractive solution or add to the overall quality of the area. It would appear visually intrusive in the street scene and in private views from neighbouring houses on account of its awkward design, overall bulk and obvious lack of subservience to, and disrespect for the design of, the original dwelling. It would therefore detract from the character and appearance of the surroundings in the context of this site.
10. The Council's approval of similar roof extensions at 4 other properties in West Bridgford are referred to in the appellant's statement, with the respective decision notices, officers' reports and plans being supplied in the appendices.
11. All those other properties are far removed from Alford Road in different site contexts. In some cases, the context is vastly different, for example at 21 Trevor Road where there are sizeable roof extensions at neighbouring houses. I note that 3 of the 4 planning permissions highlighted pre-date part of the current development plan, Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies adopted in October 2019. Significantly, all 4 schemes, including the one approved most recently in March 2024 at 39 Harrow Road, set the dormers below the main ridge and slightly further away from the edges of the roof more generally when compared to the appeal scheme in front of me.
12. In any event, it is an established planning principle that each case should be considered on its own merits based on the specific circumstances at each site and on the planning judgement of the decision maker. Consequently, the other cases that have been brought to my attention do not justify the harmful development that is proposed at the appeal site.

13. Reference has been made to permitted development rights. I accept that such rights would allow for the provision of various dormers and hip-to-gable roof enlargements. However, the scope for such rights has not been clearly defined in relation to this appeal either in the form of a scheme attached to a lawful development certificate or one that has otherwise been fully worked up. There is no clear evidence to show that the same scheme or an even more harmful physical arrangement could be achieved using such rights. Therefore, it is not possible to give any significant weight to this form of fallback in this appeal.
14. Drawing together the above, I find on the main issue that the proposed loft conversion would cause harm to the character and visual amenities of the host building and the wider area. There would be a failure to display the building and urban design quality, where appropriate attention is paid to massing, scale, height, proportion and design and the respect for local context, including the character and appearance of the neighbouring buildings and the surrounding area, that are required by Policy 10 (Design and Enhancing Local Identity) of the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and Policy 1 (Development Requirements) of the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies.
15. The scheme eschews various design principles for house extensions and loft conversions in the Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. This is not policy in itself but it carries weight as a material consideration in decision making as does the National Planning Policy Framework which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
16. The Council were correct, in my view, to raise no objections in relation to parking, highway safety and neighbouring residential amenities. Still, my finding on the main issue is decisive to the outcome of this appeal. There is conflict with the development plan. The harm cannot be mitigated by the imposition of planning conditions and it is not outweighed by other material considerations, including the improved and enlarged living space for the family home and the more effective use of land that the appeal scheme would bring about.

## **Conclusion**

17. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should not succeed.

*Andrew Dale*

INSPECTOR