



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2025

by **H Marriott MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/25/3368268

2 The Drive, South Woodford, London E18 2BL

- 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 Fadi Zaher against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref is 0971/25.
 - The development proposed is described as 'L shaped rear dormer loft conversion, internal alterations, solar panels and all associated works at 2 The Drive, E18 2BL'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal site is located within the Snaresbrook Conservation Area (CA). In reaching my decision, I have been mindful of my statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Snaresbrook Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The CA designation encapsulates a linear, north-south area of suburban development along Woodford Road, The Drive and other side streets. From my observations and the evidence before me, the special interest of the CA derives in part from the row of individually designed late Victorian, Edwardian and interwar detached residences. These dwellings, each different in design and scale incorporate decorative features such as turrets, tile hanging, half-timbering, terracotta elements and decorative ridge tiles, and are set within large gardens. Significance is also derived from the spacious character provided by the generous plots, open spaces and presence of mature trees. While there is a variety of designs and materials, individual dwellings are generally set on similar plot sizes and utilise traditional materials including brickwork facades and pitched tiled roofs. Consequently, the rhythm and form of development, together with the use of materials are important components that contribute to the significance and special interest of the CA as a whole.

5. Number 2 The Drive (No 2) is a dormer-style bungalow located on a corner plot at the junction of The Drive and Hermitage Walk. Its modest scale contrasts with the larger dwellings along The Drive. Even so, it features a distinctive eyebrow dormer on its front elevation, and its external surfaces comprise a brickwork facade and a pitched tiled roof. These elements, combined with its generous spacing on the corner plot, reflect the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding area and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the CA.
6. The Council's Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2019) states that in conservations areas, there is often a need to protect the specific characteristics of the area, requiring a more sympathetic and modest approach to development. In relation to roof alterations, the SPD advises that such additions should be subordinate in size to the roof of the house and should not appear as a dominant feature.
7. The proposed flat roof dormer would project from the main rear roof slope of No 2, set in a similar distance from each side, and would partially straddle an existing single storey outrigger. Although it would be positioned below the main ridge, the combined mass of the dormer and its eaves height, set above that of the outrigger, would result in a boxy horizontal addition to the building. This combined with the use of contrasting materials such as zinc cladding or similar, would result in an unsympathetic response and detract from the form of the original building. While the visual impact would be somewhat localised due to its rear position, the extension would nonetheless appear as an overtly dominant and modern feature, visible from public vantage points along Hermitage Walk and from neighbouring properties.
8. For these reasons, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA when considered as a whole. It follows that the proposal would not accord with the statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Act and there would be harm to the significance of the CA. Given the scale and nature of the proposal, the degree of harm to the significance of the CA would at a low level of less than substantial harm. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that such harm be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. Public benefits would be derived from the enlargement and refurbishment of No 2 to meet the needs of a growing family and would provide low-carbon housing adaptations including solar panels atop the flat roof. However, given the modest scale of the proposal, the public benefits would be limited. The Framework states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset, irrespective of the level of harm identified. In this case, the public benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset identified, leading to conflict with the historic environment protection policies of the Framework.
10. Overall, the proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. In that regard it would fail to accord with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (2018) which promote high quality design and requires development to conserve and enhance the character and significance of the historic environment, to integrate well with the surrounding area, to incorporate a roof profile and materials sympathetic to the existing dwelling and be

subordinate in terms of size, scale or height. For the same reasons, the proposed development would also be contrary to the guidance contained in the SPD.

Other Matters

11. The appellant contends that the appeal proposal seeks to minimise the loss of historic fabric and that an alternative scheme would necessitate greater demolition contrary to conservation and climate change objectives. However, there are limited details of any alternative scheme before me and it is not certain that such a scheme would be pursued, permitted or indeed represents the only alternative available. As such, such effects cannot be robustly compared.
12. The appellant refers to other dwellings in the area that display comparable roof extensions. However, I do not have full details of these schemes and cannot be certain that their circumstances are directly comparable. In any case, I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits.
13. I acknowledge the appellant's efforts to engage and work collaboratively with the Council, including through the submission of previous applications and requests for pre-application advice. However, this does not alter my decision, which has been made on the basis of the development plan and the evidence before me.
14. The Council has provided a copy of a Tree Preservation Order¹ (TPO) but has not raised any concerns in this regard, subject to the protection of trees during construction. I find no reason to disagree in this regard. Furthermore, the Council has identified no other harm in relation to living conditions, flood risk or fire safety. However, these considerations are not provide a reason to allow the appeal given the harm identified under the main issue.

Conclusion

15. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Marriott

INSPECTOR

¹ Council ref: TPO 03/22