

35 Oakroyd Avenue
Potters Bar
EN6 2EL

May 2021

Mr Scott Laban
Planning Officer
Hertsmere Borough Council

Dear Mr Laban,

Re: 35 Oakroyd Avenue, EN6 2EL - Planning Application

Thank you for taking my call earlier.

As promised, further to a conversation with Councillor Mike Reeve, I write to provide further background on our proposed planning application and some of the challenges we have been having with regard to advice being provided by The Royds, Potters Bar Conservation Area Officers at Place Services. Specifically The Conservation Officer has recommended some revisions to our proposed plans, elements of which appear to be inconsistent both with consents we have received in the past under existing guidelines, and also inconsistent with advice they have given on other proposed applications within the Royds Conservation area within the last year. I have mapped out the various concerns below:

Enlargement of existing dormer window

As your records will show, our planning application number: 16/2135/HSE which was approved on 22 December 2016 (under current Conservation guidelines) included approval to enlarge a second dormer window to match the adjacent larger dormer. Despite that, the response from the Conservation Officer is that 'I would not support the enlargement of the existing dormer'.

Addition of new Larger Dormer to match existing

While the Conservation Officer states there is no principle objection to the proposed addition of a new third Dormer, he goes to recommend that 'the additional third dormer follows the same scale as the smaller dormer'. This does not appear to be consistent with the advice given with regard to plans for three new larger dormers to be added to the roof at 65 Oakroyd Avenue under ref: 20/0505/HSE, Date: 03/06/2020.

Position of proposed roof light

The Conservation Officer concedes that the insertion of one additional roof light does not raise an in-principle objection, but he then goes on to advise that 'the location of the proposed roof light is too close to the front of the property'. He recommends it is set well back (at least 5 metres) from the front gable. Unfortunately that is unworkable as doing that would locate the proposed roof light outside the ensuite bathroom for which it is intended to provide both natural light and ventilation.

'Air raid shelter'

The Conservation Officer also appears to have taken a misplaced interest in an 'air raid shelter' in our back garden. This was constructed by the previous owners of the property and, as such, is not part of the original construction of the house. I would like to point out that this alleged 'air raid shelter' appears to simply be a hurriedly built, poorly constructed, small concrete structure which, over the decades, has become more of a liability as a water trap, than a shelter. It suffers from being constantly filled with water from the water table and results in constant damp in the garage (putting it at risk of legionnaires and other water borne illnesses) and requires very frequent pumping out to prevent flooding in the garage area. In fairness, the Conservation Officer does recommend that additional information be provided on the structure prior to a decision being made, but I thought I would flag this just so he doesn't embark on a misplaced quest to protect a structure of historic interest which I can assure you this definitely is not.

That said, the Conservation Officer did also make some additional objections, as outlined below, which we are prepared to compromise on and have amended our planning application accordingly:

- Change of rear extension from crown roof to flat roof with extension stepped in from the flank elevation.
- Move proposed single storey side extension backwards to maintain the existing garage line front.
- Change from flat roof on side extension to pitched roof to match existing.

I thank you for taking the time to review this and look forward to your favourable considerations when our plans are submitted.

Kind regards,

Jonathan Taylor-Cummings



CC: Councillor Mike Reeve
Ross Whear, Head of Planning