
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2016

by R M Pritchard MA PhD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/D/16/3155283

35 Nunhead Green, Southwark, London, SE15 3QF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Dan Bardino against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref 16/AP/0373, dated 28 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Nunhead Green Conservation Area and its effects on the character or appearance of the host property, 35 Nunhead Green.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is an unlisted, two-storey, terraced cottage in the Nunhead Green Conservation Area. No 35 is one of a group of five properties that date from the late Victorian era. These properties have parapet roofs at their front and butterfly roofs¹ at the rear. The proposed development would replace the butterfly roof with a mansard roof extension, the front of which would be set back from the front elevation of No 35 by just under 2 metres. The extension would include front and rear dormers which would be lit by sliding sash windows to match those in the existing building. The purpose of the proposed extension would be to provide additional accommodation for the appellant's family.
4. Strategic Policy 12 of Southwark's adopted Core Strategy sets general objectives for design and conservation in the Borough. It is complemented by 'saved' Policy 3.12 of the Southwark Plan that seeks to create attractive, high amenity environments through the promotion of quality design, and by Policy 3.13 that provides advice as to those design factors to which consideration should be given. These include height, scale and massing; urban structure;

¹ Butterfly roofs are often referred to as 'London roofs' because of their prevalence in the capital.

and townscape, local context and character. Within Conservation Areas, Policy 3.16 takes forward the duty set out in section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of such Areas.

5. Especially relevant to the proposed development before me is the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Residential Design Standards. The SPD provides specific advice on roof extensions. More particularly, it stipulates that roof extensions should not exceed the main roof's original ridge height, should not breach long runs of an unaltered roof line, where these are '*...exposed to long views from public spaces...*', and should not result in the loss of important historic roof forms.
6. The terrace of five properties in which No 32 stands has an unbroken roofscape at both front and rear. The frontage comprises a typical parapet that shields the butterfly or 'London' roofs that form the rear. The proposed extension would therefore be contrary to the advice in the adopted SPD. Moreover, this roofscape contributes substantially to the character of the terrace within the Nunhead Green Conservation Area. Moreover, I noted at my site visit that the terrace is adjacent to the fine set of listed Victorian almshouses that sit immediately to the west and which are an especially important feature of the Conservation Area.
7. The proposed development has been amended from that originally proposed by setting the extension back from the front parapet but I agree with the Council that it would be still be visible from longer perspectives across the Green or from Evelina Road. Those perspectives seem to me to be especially significant in terms of the setting of the Conservation Area.
8. Whilst I appreciate the appellant's objective to extend the living space available to his family, that issue cannot override my conclusion that the proposed development would not only result in material harm to the terrace of dwellings in which it would be situated but would also result in substantial material harm, thereby failing to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Nunhead Green Conservation Area. It would therefore be contrary to Policies SP12, 3.12, 3.13 and 3.16 of the adopted development plan.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R M Pritchard

INSPECTOR