

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2016

by Emma Tinsley-Evans BSoc.Sc MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 29 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/16/3152386
57B Albion Road, London TW3 3RS

- 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 Sophocles Taylor against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00017/57B/P2, dated 14 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of front and rear dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - The character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene along Albion Road; and
 - The living conditions of future occupants with regard to internal space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Albion Road is a residential street predominantly characterised by rows of 2 storey terraced dwellings. There is a fairly regular, well established and coherent pattern of development, although there are some slight variations between the rows of terraces in terms of their character and appearance.
 4. The host property is an end terrace and occupies a prominent corner position adjacent to Knevett Terrace which provides pedestrian and vehicular access to a small residential cul-de-sac to the rear of the appeal site.
 5. The properties in the terrace are of a similar style and design. When viewed from the street there is a distinct uniformity and regularity to the built form that is emphasised by the bay windows, fenestration and consistent roof line and detailing. Although many other terraces in the street have gable ends, the terrace in which the appeal dwelling sits has hipped ends. This makes it distinctive in the street scene and gives the terrace an overall balanced appearance.
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6. The creation of a gable ended roof at the appeal dwelling would unbalance the overall appearance of the existing house and terrace, contrary to the Council's Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Guidance 2003 (SPG).
7. The appeal proposal would see the erection of a front and rear dormer. Whilst these would be set in from the sides of the roof and up from the eaves by 0.5m as stipulated in the Council's SPG, they would not be set down from the ridge of the main roof. This would give the development a box-like appearance that would dominate the existing roof.
8. Given its corner plot adjacent to Knevett Terrace the proposal would be highly visible from the public domain and the dormers would appear as bulky and incongruous additions to the property. They would not therefore complement the original building or maintain the character of the general street scene as required by Policy SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015 – 2030 Volume One (LP).
9. The front dormer in particular would disrupt the consistent architectural rhythm of the terrace and would dominate the front roofslope. This would have a detrimental impact on the overall character and appearance of the host property and the terrace as a whole.
10. My attention has been drawn to a front dormer extension at 68 Albion Road. Whilst I do not have the specific details of this before me, I note that the Council considers that this was erected over 10 years ago. In any event, this isolated example does not provide sufficient justification for allowing a development that would result in the harm that I have identified.
11. Whilst I acknowledge that there are other examples of rear dormers in the vicinity, I have considered the appeal proposal in its entirety and I consider that the roof alterations proposed would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene along Albion Road.
12. The proposal would be contrary to Policy CC1 of the LP which seeks to secure development that sensitively and creatively responds to an area's character and sustains and conserves those areas which have a high quality, well established and coherent character. I find conflict with Policy CC2 of the LP which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that development responds meaningfully and sensitively to the site and carefully considers external appearance. The proposal would not accord with Policy SC7 of the LP which states that extensions should complement the original building and maintain the character of the area, amongst other things.

Living conditions

13. The proposed development would increase the size of the flat from 1 bedroom to 2 bedrooms. The Gross Internal Area of the flat would be around 54sqm; this would be below the 79sqm as set out in the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) for 2 bedroom dwellings accommodating 4 people over 2 storeys. It would also be below the 70sqm required if the dwelling were only to accommodate 3 people. Policy SC5 of the LP requires new housing development to comply with the requirements of the NDSS.

14. I acknowledge that the NDSS and Policy SC5 of the LP relate to new housing developments and residential conversions. However, Policy SC7 of the LP seeks to ensure that alterations and extensions do not harm the amenity of future occupants. Moreover, one of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
15. The proposed development would fall significantly short of the space standards that would be required if it were a new development or a residential conversion. Whilst I accept that the development would not fall within these categories, it nevertheless demonstrates a lack of internal space and I do not therefore consider that the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupants.
16. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of future occupants with regard to internal space. Whilst the nature of the proposal would not be in direct conflict with Policy SC5 of the LP which seeks to ensure suitable internal and external living space, I consider that there would be conflict with Policy SC7 of the LP. This policy seeks to ensure, amongst other things, that development does not result in harm to the amenity of future occupants.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Emma Tinsley-Evans

INSPECTOR