

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2016

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons), MSc(Dist), PgDip, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 14th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/16/3154496

14B, Oxford Gardens, Chiswick, London W4 3BW

- 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 Hayre against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00846/14B/P5, dated 25 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as a proposed L-shaped dormer loft conversion and roof terrace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The appellant's description of development differs to that shown in the Council's decision notice. As the appellant's description might give rise to uncertainty, the Council's description is preferred. This is described as erection of extension to main roof and roof of rear element of the first floor flat. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. I was unable to gain access into the rear garden when the site visit was undertaken. However and importantly, I was able to view the roof and upper floor from a garage courtyard located immediately to the rear of the appeal site, which provided an equally good vantage point in order to view the existing first floor and roof structure.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property comprises a two storey mid terrace dwellinghouse that has been subdivided into two flats. It is located within a suburban setting of similar Edwardian properties. Just to the north-east and beyond the rear boundary lie other residential terraced properties and the designated Wellesley Road Conservation Area (CA). The CA is characterised by rather grand predominantly Victorian dwellings of a planned and estate appearance many of which incorporate fine detailing of a classical style with stucco dressings.
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- Oxford Gardens and the adjoining more modern flats are excluded from an otherwise continuous CA to the north of the railway line.
6. It was notable that whilst there is a degree of homogeneity in the design of Oxford Gardens and the retention of many original features, particularly at the front of the terraces either side, the same cannot be said for the rear of the properties. Here, several properties have seen significant changes especially to their roof form with dormers and extensions now having interrupted the main roof plane of this terrace. However, that is not the case with the outriggers that remain relatively intact and contribute to the fine design rhythm at the rear. Along with some other examples in the neighbourhood, the rear main roof slope of the host property has been altered to provide a mansard extension, but like many other properties, its outrigger remains unaltered.
 7. LBC Hounslow Local Plan Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 in combination seek to promote high quality design to new developments that enhances the overall environmental and townscape character of the Borough while Policy SC7 specifically requires extensions to harmonize with adjoining properties thereby helping, in turn, to maintain the character of the area. These policies are supported by the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Residential Extension Guidelines adopted in 2003 (SPG). The SPG provides guidance on the design, size and location of dormers so that they do not dominate the original roof plane. In particular, the SPG advises that the size of dormers should be secondary to the size of the roof face within which it is set and warns against creating the appearance of a large box.
 8. The proposal would see the erection of a flat roofed addition projecting some 3.2m from the existing roof slope of the mansard extension and over the outrigger. The proposal would provide a third bedroom to the first floor flat with the attic space being reconfigured internally to provide an en-suite shower room. In order to continue at the same internal height as the existing loft extension, the flat roof would project above the roof of the outrigger.
 9. In considering this proposal I am also mindful of the statutory duty which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas¹ and national policy which advises that great weight should be given to this objective². It is therefore necessary to consider the effect of the proposal on the setting of the CA.
 10. As stated above, the appeal site's rear garden backs on to a garage court and beyond, some flats. Although the rear garden is close to the boundary of the CA, due to the orientation of the host property, intervening structures and the presence of relatively dense vegetation and trees located within rear gardens, only very slight and rather obtuse angled views of the appeal property would be available. However, despite projecting above the roof of the outrigger, due to the prominence of the existing projecting outriggers along this terrace, the proposed extension would not be readily visible from within the CA and would not materially harm land or buildings in the CA in any way. It would have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the CA.

¹ Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

² The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) paragraph 132

11. However, putting the CA to one side, the extension would be noticeable from the garage court and from properties lying to the north of the appeal site. My attention has been drawn by the appellant to the large number of extensions including alterations to roof slopes within the neighbourhood and to an appeal elsewhere in Chiswick³. Whilst changes have indeed occurred to roofscapes in the immediate neighbourhood, the outriggers remain the dominant design elements at the rear of this terrace and, overall, their composition has not been significantly compromised. The full details of the appeal are not before me. However, from what I can ascertain, the extent of the projection that was proposed at that location was somewhat smaller and the Inspector emphasised that the form of the outrigger would be largely retained, which is unlike the appeal proposal.
12. From the rear and *front-on* angle, the flat roofed addition projecting some 1.5m above the highest part of the roof of the outrigger would constitute an alien and discordant feature in this otherwise attractive and rhythmic sequence of outrigger extensions to this terraced grouping. Its projection over the ridge of the outrigger would also emphasise its dominance in relation to the rear composition to an unacceptable degree. Accordingly, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and in turn, the area more widely, which would be contrary to Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the LP and to the advice contained within the Council's SPG.

Conclusion

13. Having regard to the above reasons and to all other matters raised, this appeal is dismissed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR

³ APP/F5540/W/15/3138015