

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2016

by John Dowsett MA DipURP DipUD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/D/16/3153520

70 The Avenue, Hornsey, London N10 2QL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mark Phelps against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref: HGY/2016/1153, dated 24 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is removal of the existing roof to create an L shaped dormer roof extension to side and rear of house; three roof lights to front roof slope; removal of existing kitchen chimney stack and staircase window; addition of new staircase window to loft extension; and Juliet balcony.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for removal of the existing roof to create an L shaped dormer roof extension to side and rear of house; three roof lights to front roof slope; removal of existing kitchen chimney stack and staircase window; addition of new staircase window to loft extension; and Juliet balcony at 70 The Avenue, Hornsey, London N10 2QL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref HGY/2016/1153, dated 24 March 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan; 15-08-P-100 (Site Location & Block Plans); 15-08-P-101 (Existing Ground, First & Roof Plans); 15-08-P-102 (Existing Elevations and Sections); 15-08-P-103 (Proposed Ground, First & Roof Plans); and 15-08-P-104 (Proposed Elevations and Sections).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matter

2. The description on the decision notice issued by the Council extended the description used on the planning application form to include the provision of a Juliet balcony on the rear dormer. I note that the appellant has adopted this description on the appeal form and, as I consider that it more accurately sets out the development proposed, I have used this for the purposes of the appeal.
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Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:

- The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Vallance Road Conservation Area; and
- The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing house and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and appearance of the conservation area

4. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that in making decisions on planning applications and appeals within a Conservation Area, special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area. This is reinforced by Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets.
5. The Act and the Council's policies expressed in Policy SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2013 (Local Plan), Saved Policy CSV5 of the Haringey Unitary Development Plan 2006 (UDP) and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan 2015 (London Plan) require that new development should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of heritage assets. Reference is also made to Draft Policy DM9 of the Haringey Local Plan Development Management Development Plan Document (Pre-Submission Version) 2016. Policy DM9 does not significantly change the approach from the policies in the adopted plan, nevertheless, I do not have any details in respect of the current status of this draft policy. Consequently, as it is not yet an adopted policy I can only give it limited weight.
6. Haringey Council Supplementary Planning Guidance: Conservation and Archaeology 2003 (SPG), which has to be read alongside these policies, sets out more detailed guidance on design. This states that extensions should generally be confined to the rear or least important facades; should not upset the scale or proportions of the building; and that roof extensions should be confined to the rear and complement the appearance of the existing building.
7. The Vallance Road Conservation Area consists largely of residential properties with a small group of commercial properties and a library located around the junction of The Avenue and Alexandra Park Road. The houses are predominantly substantial, traditionally built, two storey buildings and, whilst these are of a range of designs, there are common features such as bay windows, overhanging eaves and common materials which give the area a unified character. The buildings are all of a similar age and there are a number of extensive groups of buildings that were clearly of the same design when originally built.
8. However, many of these are now much altered, including a large number of extensions to the roofs in the form of side and rear dormer windows. Many of these have flat roofs and some substantially alter the original shape and form of the roof. This is particularly evident on the section of The Avenue to the south east of the appeal building. I note that the Council state that many of

these were constructed prior to the designation of the conservation area or without the benefit of planning permission. Nonetheless, regardless of how these roof extensions came about, they are part of the established character and appearance of the conservation area and this would also have been the case when it was designated. The addition of a roof extension to the appeal building would therefore be consistent with the existing character of the area where dormer extensions are common.

9. Whilst the dormer would not be wholly confined to the rear of the building and would also extend along the side roof, it would be set back from elevation of the property that is closest to the highway and partially concealed behind a tall chimney stack. In addition, as The Avenue rises uphill from north west to south east, there is a change in level between the appeal building and the neighbouring houses at numbers 66 and 68. Due to these neighbouring properties being at a higher level and the close spacing of the houses in the street, the side element of the proposed dormer will be largely screened from view.
10. To the rear of the appeal building there is a more open area consisting of private gardens and a small garage court. The rear part of the dormer extension would be visible from within this area and in oblique views from the rear windows of a small number of houses on Alexandra Park Road. However, it would be seen in the context of existing dormer windows on properties to the south east numbers 62-68 The Avenue and 148 and 156 Alexandra Park Road and would be consistent with the appearance of this part of the conservation area. Given the extent of the conservation area and the relatively small scale of the development, the significance of the conservation area as a heritage asset and the way that it is experienced would not be diminished.
11. As such, I find that the development would have a neutral effect and thus preserve the character and appearance of the Vallance Road Conservation Area as required by London Plan Policy 7.8; Local Plan Policy SP12; Saved Policy CSV5 of the UDP; and the Conservation and Archaeology SPG which seek preserve or enhance the character, appearance and significance of heritage assets.

Character and appearance of the existing house and the surrounding area

12. The appeal building is one half of a pair of large, hipped roofed, semi-detached, houses in a U-shaped configuration. Part of the recess between the front wings of the houses has been infilled by a two storey, flat roofed extension, which incorporates the principle entrances of both houses.
13. Although the dormer would occupy most of the rear roof slope of the house and part of the side of the roof and, in this respect, would not be wholly compliant with the guidance in the SPG, the character of the house is mainly derived from the configuration of the front elevation. Although the dormer is substantial, due to the overall size of the main roof, arising from the shape of the house, the dormer would not fundamentally detract from the defining roof form.
14. The dormer window would alter the shape of the roof of the house, however, it is a question of whether this alteration is harmful. As set out above, the side element of the dormer is largely concealed by other built features and the rear elevation of the house is not widely visible from other properties or the public domain. Due to the separation distance from the properties to the rear, the

extension would not have an overbearing effect on these, and the effect on number 68 is reduced by the change in level between the properties. Although the dormer would be visible from the rear garden of number 72, as a result of the height of the houses and the dormer being slightly set back from the lower edge of the roof, the effect on the occupiers of this property would not, in my view, be so severe as to warrant refusing planning permission. I also note that no representations have been received from neighbouring occupiers.

15. The dormer is designed in such a way that the windows in the rear elevation align with the windows below which assists in maintaining the architectural integrity of the elevation taken as a whole. Although the dormer would disrupt the symmetry of the pair of semi-detached houses, the symmetry of the rear of the building is less noticeable as it can only be seen in longer, oblique, views from houses on Alexandra Park Road and from the garage court to the rear where the garage buildings and boundary fences interrupt line of sight.
16. Within this context, and given the presence of a considerable number of dormers close to the appeal building, I find that the proposed development would not cause harm to the appearance of the building or the wider surroundings. The proposal would therefore meet the relevant requirements of Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2015, and Policy SP11 of the Local Plan which seek a high standard of design that respects its context and relates positively to the locality.
17. Reference is also made in the decision notice to Policies DM1 and DM12 of the Haringey Local Plan Development Management Development Plan Document (Pre-Submission Version) 2016. As with Policy DM9, I do not have any details in respect of the current status of these draft policies and, consequently, can only give limited weight to them.

Conditions

18. In order to provide certainty as to what has been permitted I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings. In the interests of ensuring that the development is in keeping with the existing building and surrounding area, it is also necessary to impose a condition requiring that the materials used in the development match those of the existing building.

Conclusion

19. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

John Dowsett

INSPECTOR