
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2016

by Christina Downes BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/D/16/3153748
9A Overstone Road, London W6 0AA

- 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 Dr and Mrs J De Silva against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2015/06094/FUL, dated 29 December 2015, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a front and rear mansard roof extension with dormer windows.
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Decision

1. For the reasons given below, the appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The appeal property is a Victorian mid-terrace house. On either side of this section of Overstone Road there are terraces comprising three storey houses with basements. I observed that each terrace has a strong sense of rhythm due to the individual houses having similar architectural features, materials and fenestration that remain largely unmodified. The roof slopes on these particular terraces are relatively shallow and the projecting chimney stacks and low dividing party walls have mostly been retained. The lack of alteration at roof level contributes to the harmonious appearance of the terrace of which the appeal property is a part.
 3. The Bradmore Conservation Area has recently been extended to include Overstone Road and the adjoining streets. No appraisal has yet been undertaken for this heritage asset. However, it seems to me that its significance in large part derives from the visual cohesiveness of the Victorian terraces, including their roof profiles, and their relationship with the strong rectilinear street pattern. Original features have been eroded in places and some streets have been significantly changed. However, overall the architectural integrity and historic form of the conservation area is reasonably well preserved, in my opinion.
 4. The proposed roof extension would have a steeply sloping mansard style roof. This would be slightly set back by the retention of a small section of the original roof profile at the front and back. The new flat roof would extend some 0.7m higher than the existing ridge so much of the chimney stack would be obscured and the party walls would be significantly raised on either side. Whilst the proposed development may not be apparent from immediately
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outside the property, I have no doubt that it would be seen from the opposite pavement and in views further along the street. Notwithstanding the set-backs at the front and rear, I consider that the proposal would introduce a bulk of built form at roof level that would appear as an incongruous and intrusive feature. It would fail to integrate satisfactorily with the dwelling itself or the existing terrace of which it forms a part. This in turn would be harmful to the visual appearance and character of the street scene and damage the significance of the heritage asset as described above. The Council's *Planning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document* states that front roof extensions are generally unacceptable and will only be approved if the property is within a terrace that has already been significantly impaired by such extensions. That is not the situation here.

5. I appreciate that roof extensions are particularly prevalent in some nearby streets. However, in Overstone Road, the front roofscapes remain largely unaltered. The appellants referred to Nos 27 and 39 and I observed that these are particularly prominent and unsympathetic examples of where changes have taken place at roof level. I also saw the smaller roof additions at Nos 41 and 43. Furthermore, at 6 and 7 Adie Road the roofs have been raised and large dormers inserted. The position of these houses at the junction with Overstone Road means that the alterations are highly visible and to my mind appear discordant in the streetscape. The information provided and my own observations suggest that the roof works to the aforementioned properties were constructed at a time when design standards were less rigorous and prior to the designation of the conservation area.
6. It is noted that planning permission was granted recently on appeal for a roof addition to 36 Overstone Road. However, this mainly affected the rear roofslope with an increase in the ridge of only about 0.3m. In this case my colleague considered that such a small increase in height would not stand out. He commented that there was a lack of uniformity in the roofscape. In terms of roofing materials I saw this to be the case but, in any event, the nature of the proposal is clearly different from the present scheme.
7. I observed that there is a large mansard roof on the building adjacent to 2 Overstone Road. However, this stands forward of the adjoining terrace and is of a different character. It provides a visual transition between the residential terrace and the higher roofline of the Dartmouth Castle public house on the corner with Glenthorne Road.
8. I also saw the new hotel development being constructed on the opposite side of the junction. It appears that the new building will have a mansard storey that is higher than the terrace of Victorian properties that previously stood on the site. This new development is within the conservation area but it is a building entity in its own right within a position that faces onto a busy main road. It could be envisaged to be responding to the scale of the public house and other buildings to the south rather than the more domestic character of the residential properties in the streets to the north. I note that the appellants contend that the Council has been inconsistent in its decision making but each of the examples cited are subject to different circumstances and considerations to the appeal proposal.
9. For all of the above reasons I consider that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the appearance of the building and the character and visual amenities of the streetscape. Furthermore, it would fail to preserve the

character and appearance of the Bradmore Conservation Area. It would not accord with Policy BE1 in the Council's *Core Strategy*, which seeks to ensure that all development creates a high quality urban environment and respects and enhances its townscape context. It would also conflict with Policies DM G3 and DM G7 in the *Development Management Local Plan*. These policies aim to ensure that alterations and extensions are successfully integrated into the design of the existing building and that the significance of heritage assets are preserved or enhanced.

10. It is appreciated that the appellants wish to provide additional bedroom space for their children and do not consider that purchasing a larger property would be a viable proposition due to the high house prices in this part of London. I also note that they are established within the local community and run a business in Hammersmith that provides local employment. These are all factors that need to be taken into account although there is no evidence that the refusal of planning permission would necessarily result in the loss of jobs or conversely that the grant of planning permission would guarantee their security. The benefits of the proposal seem to me to be mainly of a personal nature. However, even if there were some public benefit this would be insufficient to outweigh the environmental harm that would ensue if the development were to go ahead.
11. In reaching this conclusion I have carefully considered the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol, Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights and Article 3(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, for the reasons given I do not consider that there would be any disproportionate interference with the rights of the individuals concerned.
12. I have taken account of all other matters raised in the representations, including various development plan policies and Council standards that are considered by the appellants to be complied with. Nevertheless, it is concluded that the proposal would not accord with the development plan as a whole or be in the public interest for the reasons that I have given. In the circumstances the appeal does not succeed.

Christina Downes

INSPECTOR