

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by Emma Tinsley-Evans BSoc.Sc MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 04 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/16/3154611
32 Gayford Road, London W12 9BN

- 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 Padraic O'Sullivan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2016/00923/FUL, dated 29 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of an additional floor at roof level; installation of French doors to replace the existing windows and the erection of obscure glazed screens around the flat roofs at ground and first floor levels to the rear elevation, in connection with their use as terraces; installation of a new window to the side of the rear back addition at ground floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development differs between that given on the planning application form and the Council's decision notice. The appellant has also used the Council's description of development on the appeal form and in other submissions. For the avoidance of doubt, this is the description of the development in the header above and accurately describes the proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene along Gayford Road.

Reasons

4. Located in a predominately residential area, Gayford Road is largely characterised by 2 storey terraced properties. Whilst there is not an overall consistency in terms of the appearance of the properties, those of the same design generally form distinct groups in the street scene.
 5. The appeal building is a 3 storey (including semi-basement level), mid-terrace property forming part of a group of 6 buildings (Nos 24 – 34) of the same architectural type. No 32 and others in this group are notably different from the majority of other properties on the street in terms of their style, height and staggered front building line. They have a uniform and coherent appearance as demonstrated by the regular fenestration and entrance positioning, lintel
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detailing and strong front and side parapet which is a distinguishing architectural feature of this part of the terrace. Consequently, I consider that this group of properties are distinctive in the street scene.

6. Their prominent roofline and staggered front building line can be seen on entering Gayford Road from Askew Road. This allows part of the side profile of the roofs to be seen from the street, where it appears that the properties in this part of the terrace have largely retained their original roof structure.
7. The appeal proposal would see the erection of a roof extension to No 32. It would be set back by around 1.5m from the front of the property and would align with the front elevation of the adjoining property at No 30, which itself is set back from No 32 due to the staggered front building line.
8. The roof extension would however project above the existing parapet and would be an isolated example of a roof extension in a terrace where there is currently an absence of such features.
9. I acknowledge that being set back by around 1.5m the roof extension would not be visually perceptible from the street directly in front of the host property. Moreover, the stagger of the existing building line would significantly limit views from the west along Gayford Road. Nevertheless, given the size of the roof extension, its projection above the parapet and the visibility of the rooflines on approach from Askew Road and along Gayford Road from the east, the roof extension would be visible from the street. It would appear as an incongruous form of development that would be inconsistent with the character and appearance of the original property and the wider terrace of which it forms a part.
10. The proposed change to the architectural style of this property would, in my opinion, detract from the consistent and regular pattern of development that characterises this group of properties along Gayford Road.
11. I recognise that the appeal building itself is painted white which makes it distinctive amongst its neighbours and I have seen that there are different boundary treatments at ground floor level that are present on the street. Nevertheless, there is a prevailing architectural style in this part of the terrace that is not diminished by the colour of the properties or boundary treatments, which can change over time.
12. With regard to the other elements of the appeal proposal, including the installation of French doors and the erection of obscure glazed screens around the flat roofs at ground and first floor levels in connection with their use as roof terraces, they would be at the rear of the property and would not be visible from the street. Similarly, the installation of a new window to the side of the rear back addition at ground floor level would be minor and would have no adverse visual impact.
13. Notwithstanding this, I am mindful of the emphasis that the appellant has placed on the merits of the overall scheme in terms of the improvements to the existing quality of accommodation and the improved amenity space for the extended flat. Whilst I acknowledge that these improvements are benefits that merit some weight in favour of the proposal, the improvements to the quality of the first floor flat in particular, are largely dependent on the roof extension.

14. Therefore, although I have found that the other elements of the appeal proposal would not, of themselves, cause harm, I have considered the appeal proposal in its entirety.
15. Overall, I therefore consider that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene along Gayford Road.
16. I find conflict with Policy BE1 of the Council's Core Strategy 2011 (CS) which seeks, amongst other things, to ensure development respects its local context and character. The proposed development does not accord with Policy DM G3 of the Council's Development Management Local Plan 2013 (DMLP) which seeks to ensure that alterations and extensions are compatible with the character of existing development, their neighbours and their setting. They should also be successfully integrated into the architectural design of the existing building, amongst other things.

Other Matters

17. The appellant has drawn my attention to examples of other developments in the area. I do not have the specific details of a number of these before me, nor am I familiar with the characteristics or context of each site that may have led to their approval.
18. However, with regard to the development at 27 Cobbald Road, I note that this proposal included a rear roof extension with the installation of 2 rooflights to the front elevation, not a front extension. Moreover, 27 Cobbald Road has a different architectural style to the appeal property and I do not consider that they are directly comparable.
19. The example at 788 Fulham Road is some distance away from the appeal site in a commercial area and I note from that appeal decision that the Inspector considered the proposal in the context of other rooftop extensions in the terrace. This is not the case in Gayford Road and the specific examples referred to by the appellant do not lead me to a different overall conclusion in this case.
20. I acknowledge the concern of a neighbour to the rear of the appeal site who considers that the proposed development would harm their privacy. However, the proposed roof terraces would include obscure glazed screens standing around 1.7m high. This would restrict views of the properties to the rear such that there would not be an unacceptable loss of privacy.
21. Whilst there have been very few other local objections to the proposed development, this does not alter my conclusion that there would be harm to the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene along Gayford Road.

Conclusion

22. 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