
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2016

by C L Humphrey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1st December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/D/16/3156798

1 Montrose Villas, Hammersmith Terrace, London W6 9TT

- 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 Mrs and Mrs Rudder against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2016/01420/FUL, dated 30 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is 'Replacement of the existing ground & first floor side extension to the side of the rear addition, alteration to the rear elevation and a new single storey entrance extension along the flank elevation of the property.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2 storey house located at the eastern end of a short Victorian terrace on the north side of Hammersmith Terrace. The property is identified on the Local Register as a Building of Merit and the appeal site lies within The Mall Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).
 4. The character of the Conservation Area is derived from the historic built form and its relationship with the river, providing an exceptional townscape to the river edge. Fragments of 17th and 18th century Hammersmith survive and are focused around three groups of listed buildings at Hammersmith Terrace, Upper Mall and Lower Mall. Areas of late Victorian residential development are associated with each of these groups. The individual houses and terraces of this period make an important contribution to a townscape of value. The appeal site is located in sub-area A of the Conservation Area (Chiswick Mall to Hammersmith Terrace). The main character of this part of the Conservation Area is derived from the groups of terraces of different scales and styles.
 5. The appeal proposal relates to the erection of a single storey entrance extension to the side of the main house and a ground and first floor extension to the side of the rear addition.
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6. Although a number of properties in the surrounding area have been the subject of alterations and extensions, the characteristic architectural rhythm created by the repeating pattern of projecting pairs of modest subservient 2 storey rear additions has been maintained along the terrace. The existing rear addition to the appeal property has a small first floor extension to the side. This extension is separated from the main rear elevation of the house and is significantly smaller in length, width and height than the rear addition. It therefore appears as a subordinate feature, which preserves the traditional proportions of the rear addition and largely maintains the solid to void relationship.
7. The proposed first floor extension would not affect the established rear building line along the terrace or encroach into the main part of the back garden. The proposed extension would be constructed in matching bricks, and the fenestration at first floor level on the rear elevation would reflect the existing timber sash windows. The extended rear addition would remain narrower than the main rear elevation and lower than the main eaves of the appeal property. However, the proposed development would be the same height as the rear addition, would finish flush with its north elevation and considerably increase its width. As a result, the extended rear addition would no longer appear subservient to the main house, and would unbalance the established solid to void relationship to the rear of the appeal property and along the terrace. Furthermore, the appeal proposal would introduce an uncharacteristic horizontal emphasis to the north elevation of the rear addition.
8. Whilst the proposed first floor extension would not be visible from the street, it would be seen from the rear windows and gardens of neighbouring residential properties within the Conservation Area. The lack of public views is no basis for permitting the creation of a dominant and incongruous feature.
9. The proposed single storey entrance extension would not obscure any features of architectural or historic merit, would be set well back from the front elevation and would be subordinate to the existing house. The proposed ground floor extension to the side of the rear addition would not extend beyond the established rear building line, and would be of a modest scale and a straightforward design which would not compete with the existing property. The Council raises no objection to either of the proposed ground floor extensions, and I note that planning permission (Ref 2016/02831/FUL) has recently been granted for the erection of ground floor extensions to the appeal property. However, the ground floor extensions form an integral part of the scheme before me, and therefore these elements of the appeal proposal are not severable from the proposed first floor extension.
10. Overall, by reason of the scale, siting and design of the proposed first floor extension, the appeal proposal would result in the creation of a bulky, overbearing and discordant form of development which would fail to respect the established architectural rhythm, form and proportions of the appeal property and the terrace as a whole.
11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of The Mall Conservation Area. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to the design and heritage conservation and enhancement aims of Policy BE1 of the Hammersmith and

Fulham Core Strategy, Policies DM G3 and DM G7 of the Hammersmith and Fulham Development Management Local Plan and the Hammersmith and Fulham Planning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), in particular SPD Design Policies 31 and 34.

12. In addition to the development plan policies and guidance referred to above, I have had regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the policy aims in respect of design, heritage and housing set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
13. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would not constitute good design, respond to local character, promote or reinforce local distinctiveness, raise the standard of design in the area or sustain and enhance the significance of the heritage asset, as specifically required by paragraphs 56, 58, 60, 63 and 131 of the Framework. As a result, the appeal proposal would fail to protect and enhance the built environment as required by the environmental role set out in paragraph 7 of the Framework. The three dimensions of sustainable development are mutually dependent, and I consider that the conflict with the environmental dimension would outweigh any positive contributions the appeal proposal would make towards the social and economic dimensions through the construction of additional living accommodation in an accessible location. As such, the proposal would not constitute sustainable development when assessed against the policies contained within the Framework as a whole.
14. I conclude that the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area which I have identified above would be less than substantial. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. I do not consider that the provision of additional living accommodation within the appeal property would amount to a public benefit sufficient to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the heritage asset.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C L Humphrey

INSPECTOR