
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 08 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/W/16/3155968

42 Belgrave Road, City of Westminster, London SW1V 1RG

- 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 Nazmin Kassam against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 15/09887/FULL, dated 22 October 2015, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a single-storey rear extension at second floor level to provide an additional en suite hotel bedroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single-storey rear extension to provide an additional en suite hotel bedroom at 42 Belgrave Road, City of Westminster, London SW1V 1RG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 15/09887/FULL, dated 22 October 2015 and the plans submitted with it.

Procedural Matters

2. The application that led to this appeal was retrospective and I saw at my site visit that the development had been completed. I have thus used an amended version of the description of development in the banner heading above based on that in the Decision Notice rather than the application form as it captures accurately the scope of the development. However, I have omitted the word 'retention' from that description as it does not fall within the definition of the term 'development' for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
 3. The appellant submitted two plans with the appeal documents showing proposed changes to the front elevation (7530-APP-001 Rev C and 7530-APP-005-Rev B). These plans were not before the Council when it made its decision on the planning application that led to this appeal. Moreover, the proposals that they show are entirely severable from the development that is the subject of this appeal, and not captured adequately in the description of development given and publically consulted upon. Consequently, the changes included within these plans would need to be the subject of consultation with the Council, and potentially a fresh application in the first instance.
 4. The Council adopted Westminster's City Plan (the City Plan) on 9 November 2016 after the determination of the planning application that led
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to this appeal. I consulted the parties on the effects of this change. However, as the relevant policies given in the reasons for refusal are unchanged from the previous version of the City Plan, I am satisfied that no parties would be prejudiced by my determination of the appeal in accordance with the recently adopted version.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this appeal is whether the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Pimlico Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is part of a long four-storey terrace over basements, the classical façade of which, faced in stucco, contributes to the wider architectural character and rhythm of Belgrave Road. To the rear, the terrace is much more functional in character lacking the rich architectural detailing of its principal façade. The rear elevations are faced in brick with prominent closet wings which extend over half the width of each property's back wall. At the second floor level, in general, the closet wings have a much shallower projection than in their lower storeys. No 44 is a notable exception to this where the second floor element of the closet wing appears to have been extended to the same depth as its lower storeys; No 46's closet wing is also more substantial than the general pattern with a rendered side elevation that is visible from Warwick Way in the gap between the terraces. The functional character of the rear elevation, and that of the terrace on Warwick Way that runs roughly perpendicularly to the Belgrave Road terrace, is emphasised by incremental alterations and additions including air conditioning paraphernalia, extensions and roof alterations of varying scales and character.
7. The host building is characteristic of Pimlico Conservation Area's substantial terraces. The scale, classical proportions, and detailing of these terraces contribute considerably to the conservation area's townscape and architectural character, from which its significance derives to a considerable degree. However, the contrast between the polite public facing façades of Pimlico's buildings and the underlying modesty of their rear aspects also contributes to the area's wider character.
8. The appeal development is a small extension at second floor level that extends the closet wing to the same depth as its lower projection. The extension is faced in brick with a bonding pattern similar to that of the wider rear elevation, and broadly mirrors the proportions of the closet wing at No 44. A sash window is included within the extension's rear elevation.
9. The appeal development is not widely visible. I saw that whilst it was discernible in the gap between the Belgrave Road and Warwick Way terraces that it was in the context of the extended closet wing at No 44 and the larger closet wing at No 46. The wider rear elevation of the terrace is not visible in this view, and thus the proportions of the development do not read as dominant, incongruous or interruptive of a predominant rhythm to any material degree. I note that the more substantial closet wing at No 46 was apparently designed as a terminal feature in the terrace closing the view of its rear elevation. However, due to the more subservient scale of the appeal development, the architectural dominance and prominence within the

streetscene of No 46's closet wing is not challenged, and thus the character of the terrace is not diminished in this regard.

10. Whilst I note that in general the more shallow projections of the upper closet wings along the terrace impart a sense of group value, I saw that alteration to these more generally is not unusual, including varying cladding and roof treatments, which whilst maintaining overall proportions erode group value to some degree. Furthermore, the width of the appeal development maintains the overall rhythm of this elevation, and its materials and brick-bonding pattern are sensitive to its host building. Moreover, this rear elevation is clearly more utilitarian than the polite façade of the terrace and the appeal development is entirely in character with this aspect's modest and functional nature. Consequently, the appeal development does not look incongruous and does not erode the underlying modesty of the building's rear elevation.
11. Accordingly, as the appeal development does not undermine the architectural character of its host dwelling or the wider terrace, it causes no detrimental effects to the townscape, and thus the significance of the Pimlico Conservation Area. In this regard the appeal development meets the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework. Moreover, as the appeal development does not fail to preserve the character or appearance of the Pimlico Conservation Area it meets the statutory duty given in s 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. For these reasons too, the appeal development does not conflict with Policies S25 and S28 of the City Plan; or Policies DES1, DES5, DES9, or paragraphs 10.108 to 10.128 of the Westminster Unitary Development Plan (adopted January 2007). Taken together, and amongst other matters, these policies seek to ensure that alterations and extensions are sensitive to their host dwellings and to the character and appearance of heritage assets, and their surroundings more generally.

Conclusion

12. No list of suggested conditions was supplied by the Council, and the retrospective nature of the appeal scheme means that is not necessary for me to attach any in this instance.
13. The appeal development does not conflict with the Policies of the development plan insofar as they are relevant and have been brought to my attention. Consequently, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

G J Fort

INSPECTOR