
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2016

by D Boffin BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI Dip Bldg Cons (RICS) IHBC

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

Decision date: 28 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/16/3157955

31 Crestway, Wandsworth, London SW15 5DB

- 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 Ms Rachel West against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/2954, dated 21 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension adding side and rear dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the area, including the Westmead Conservation Area (WCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is sited in the northern part of the WCA. From the details available to me I consider that the significance of the WCA is largely drawn from the suburban housing that it contains together with its use of materials, pattern of development and the relationship of buildings to the spaces around them. This part of WCA is identified as the Willetts Estate and is characterised by detached and semi-detached houses in a Neo-Vernacular style that is vaguely based on Arts & Craft style architecture.¹
4. I note that guidance in the Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) states that *"if your house is in a conservation area any alterations to the roof should preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of that particular area"*.² The Westmead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAAM) states that *"in a less visible location at the side or rear of the house, a small, traditionally detailed dormer with a flat top and lead cheeks may be suitable for the Edwardian properties in the Spencer Lodge Estate, whilst a small hipped dormer may better suit the Arts and Crafts inspired houses in the Willetts Estate"*.
5. The majority of dwellings have steeply pitched hipped roofs and 2-storey bay windows on the front elevation. The dwellings either side of the site have a

¹ Figure 9 and Paragraph 6.9 of Westmead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.

² Paragraph 4.130

similarly designed roof to the appeal property. I acknowledge that these 2 dwellings have been extended in the past but the main hipped roofs appear mainly unaltered when viewed from Crestway.

6. The hipped roofs add to the sense of space between the buildings and emphasise the prominence of the bay windows. The proposed roof extension would project over a significant portion of the side facing hips and would wrap around and stretch across the rear roof slope of the main part of the dwelling. The side dormers would have hips to the front and sides but the central and rear section would have a shallow crown roof and would be just below the ridge of the roof. As such the extension would not have the appearance of small hipped dormer windows.
7. Furthermore, due to the projection beyond the hips, the height of the extension and the fairly limited space around it on the roof slopes, the extension would appear unacceptably dominant giving the dwelling a discordant and top heavy appearance. These adverse effects would occur despite the use of appropriate materials and the set back from the front of the property. Moreover, given the space between the host dwelling and its neighbours and the visibility of the side roof slopes from Crestway, the side dormers would be prominent features when viewed from the street.
8. The undue dominance and excessive bulk of the extension would also be apparent in views from the adjacent rear gardens. I acknowledge that the existing landscaping may partially screen the dwelling. Irrespective, the requirement for development proposals to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of WCA applies with equal force whether or not the proposal is prominent or in public view.
9. Whilst reasonably, localised in its extent, the effect of the scheme would be to diminish unacceptably the character, appearance and integrity of the host building with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and WCA.
10. The appellant has drawn my attention to various extensions in the immediate vicinity of the site. Whilst I note that there are numerous dormer roof extensions to nearby dwellings the majority are of an appropriate design and size for their context. I appreciate that 55 Crestway has been significantly altered and extended. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances of these cases and so cannot be certain that they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal.
11. Moreover, none of the dormers appear to be a wrap-around design of the type proposed at the appeal property and I do not consider that these additions, that have taken place, have completely changed or redefined the overall significance of this area. In any case, I am required to determine the appeal on its own merits.
12. Therefore, taking all the above points into consideration, the proposed development would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the host building, the area and WCA. Thus, the significance of the designated heritage asset would be harmed. It follows that the proposal would conflict with Policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the Development Management Policies Document. These policies, amongst other things, seek high quality, sustainable urban design that conserves and where appropriate enhances the

character and appearance of heritage assets, extensions that do not dominate and compete with the original building and roof extensions that are not visually intrusive and do not harm either the street scene or the building's appearance. The proposal would also not comply with guidance in the SPD and the CAAM.

13. In the language of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the harm the proposal would cause to the significance of WCA would be less than substantial as the impact of the proposal would be relatively localised. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. There are no substantial public benefits to outweigh the harm caused and as such it would not comply with the Framework. I have attached considerable importance and weight to the desirability of avoiding any such harmful effect in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Other Matters

14. I recognise that the appellant has concerns over the advice that was given at pre-application stage and believes that the Council's decision making is inconsistent. However, these are not matters for my consideration and do not therefore alter my decision.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D. Boffin

INSPECTOR