
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: 29 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/16/3156629

39 Howards Lane, London SW15 6NX

- 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 Helena Sanders against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/3245, dated 27 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a new dormer window to the front of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a new dormer window to the front of the property at 39 Howards Lane, London SW15 6NX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/3245, dated 27 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 15.005.EX00; 15.005.EX01; 15.005.EX03; 15.005A.PR01; 15.005A.PR02 and 15.005A.PR03.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of all the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the West Putney Conservation Area (WPCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is cited as being located in character area D, the Westbury Estate, in the West Putney Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAM). From the details available to me I consider that the significance of the WPCA 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.
 4. This part of WPCA is characterised by detached and semi-detached 2-storey housing on a regular grid structure with similar house sizes and types providing
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a harmonious regularity. The CAAM states that many of the houses in this character area have dormer windows which are either original or have been added in intervening years.¹ It goes on to state that *"a small lead clad dormer with a sash window is often suitable for Victorian and Edwardian properties whilst a small hipped dormer with casement windows might suit Arts and Crafts inspired houses better. Box dormers that cover the entire roof are less attractive externally and interrupt the pitched roofscapes."*²

5. 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"*.³
6. The appeal proposal would involve the construction of a dormer window on the front elevation of the appeal property. I noted at my site visit that the adjacent dwelling has a large box type dormer on the front elevation and that there are numerous examples of dormer windows on dwellings in this part of WPCA. The dormer window as proposed would sit above the first floor window, it would be appreciably set in from the eaves, ridgeline and hip of the roof and it would have similar detailing to traditional dormer windows that I saw in this part of WPCA. The appellant has stated that the dormer will be constructed in lead with a timber sliding sash window. As such, it would not have the appearance of a box dormer and it would not be incongruous, dominant or crudely designed in relation to the host dwelling.
7. I conclude that the proposed development would preserve the character, appearance and significance of WPCA. As such the proposal would be in accordance with S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) which requires that, in the exercise of planning powers in conservation areas, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. It follows that it complies with Policies DMS1 and DMS2 of the Development Management Policies Document (DMPD). These policies, amongst other things, seek high quality, sustainable urban design that conserves and where appropriate enhances the character and appearance of heritage assets.
8. In relation to DMPD Policy DMH5 the proposals would comply with part (a) (i) in that the extension does not dominate and compete with the original building but it would not technically comply with part (a) (ii) in that the dormer window would not be confined to the rear of the building. However, this part of the policy goes on to state that where the extension is visible from the street or any other public place, it will be permitted if it is sympathetic to the style of the building, not visually intrusive and does not harm either the street scene or the building's appearance and the proposal would comply with that part of the policy. The proposal would also comply with guidance in the SPD and CAAM.

Conditions

9. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council against the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance and the Framework. In the interests of conciseness and enforceability the wording of some of the conditions has been amended. In order to provide certainty as to what has been permitted I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings.

¹ Paragraph 8.7 page 61

² Paragraph 2.9 page 115

³ Paragraph 4.130

In the interests of character and appearance, it is necessary to impose a condition requiring details of the external materials.

10. In the case of the pre-commencement condition, I consider that resolution of the matter specified to be of sufficient significance to the achievement of an acceptable development and in safeguarding the subsequent form of development such that it would be inappropriate to proceed further without the prior clarification and certainty that would arise from their approval.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons, and taking account of all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

D. Boffin

INSPECTOR