

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 December 2016

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/16/3163206

3 Ursula Street, London, SW11 3DW

- 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 E Bertarelli against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2106/3896, dated 1 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a rear roof loft extension and mansard above two storey back addition.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a well proportioned two storey semi-detached home in an established residential neighbourhood which is characterised by properties of broadly similar size and style that come together to form an area of pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above.
 4. The site lies within the Three Sisters Conservation Area. There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Policy DMS 2 in the Council's Development Management Policy Document (DMPD) broadly reflects S72(1) as part of its text.
 5. The scheme would involve a side facing flat roofed mansard on a two storey outrigger which is presently a visually subservient element of the dwelling. This would in itself be an ungainly and top heavy addition and even with slate cladding would patently draw upon little of the original building for its design ethos. It would be compounded in its incongruity by a flat roofed element being formed in the main roof of the dwelling. Finally a key element in the incompatible whole would be a necessary raising of the party wall parapet
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which runs down the centre of the pair of properties and also an increase in height of the shared chimney stack. The planned vertical wall would add more than one metre above the existing party wall parapet and consequently rise markedly over the roof of the outrigger of the neighbouring dwelling and provide a most uncomfortable and unbalanced visual relationship for this roofscape. The semi-detached pair is at a corner position and new works would be clearly visible in the street scene. Even allowing for some visual filtering by trees the development would appear as an unsympathetic overly-sized extension arrangement which failed to harmonise with the host property and its neighbouring dwelling or have regard to the aesthetics of the wider area.

6. Having regard to the above I conclude that there would be conflict with S72(1) of the Act and DMPD Policy DMS 2; there would not be preservation of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additionally, taken together, Policies DMS 1 and DMH 5 of the DMPD call for, amongst other matters, high quality design sympathetic to the original building and its wider setting. I conclude that the appeal scheme would also conflict with these policies. Furthermore, whilst they could not be expected to cover every eventuality, the proposal would also run contrary to the objectives of the Council's Housing SPD (2015) and the Three Sisters Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy.

Other matters

7. I sympathise with the Appellant's wish to extend and improve the family accommodation within this property and to remain within the area. I can see that the scheme seeks to overcome the Council's objections to a previous larger proposal. I take the point that there is some elevational variation along rear stretches in this neighbourhood and noted and observed a number of rear alterations drawn to my attention. I do not know the exact circumstances relating to all of these and some extensions do not contribute positively to the scene or set a suitable benchmark in design terms. Furthermore there are generally differences locationally, in scale and in design from the proposal before me and some appear to have been historically determined within a different planning policy context. In any event I must determine the appeal scheme on its own merits. I note that the Council does not raise concerns over living conditions for neighbours.
8. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
9. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) have been considered. Key objectives of the Framework are to protect and enhance the qualities of the natural and built environment as well as to safeguard heritage assets; development plan policies which I cite mirror these. The Framework underlines that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. The appeal proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset however what public benefits there would be, such as construction employment, would not outweigh this harm. Furthermore there are no other benefits, including to the Appellant, which to my mind would be of a scale to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area which I have identified.

Overall conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR