
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2017

by G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 07 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/16/3161740

221A Dawes Road, Hammersmith and Fulham, London SW6 7Q7

- 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 N Kertesz against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2016/02360/FUL, dated 29 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of additional floor at roof level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of its host building and surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is the upper floors of an end-terrace building of three storeys in a prominent corner location at the junction of Dawes Road and Hannell Road. Faced in brick, the upper floors of the terrace have a strong sense of rhythm imparted by the regularity of their window openings, which is reinforced at roof level by the prominent chimney stacks and party wall upstands. Whilst the character of buildings varies along Dawes Road more widely, the use of consistent materials, proportions and detailing, such as the dog-tooth brickwork at eaves level, emphasise the architectural integrity of the appeal property's terrace. Across Hannell Road, the corner building is of markedly similar design to the appeal property.
 4. The appeal scheme comprises comprehensive alterations at the appeal property's roof level replacing the existing roof with a flat-roofed extension with pitched sides inset from a parapet that would be raised above the existing level of the eaves. Dormer windows would be included in the pitched elements of the proposed roof. The height of the party wall upstand adjacent to the chimney stack would be raised.
 5. I am aware that the development proposal has been designed to address the reasons for refusal on a previous scheme. However, due to its scale and detailing, the proposed roof would read as a discordant addition to the terrace where roofs of a more traditional and consistent design predominate. This
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discordant effect would be exacerbated by proposals to build up the eaves level of the appeal building, and the party wall upstand adjacent to the chimney, which would read as jarring additions, insensitive to the architectural integrity and rhythm of the wider terrace.

6. The proposed roof would be within the envelope of the existing building, and aspects of its design would accord with Council guidelines with regard to mansard roofs. Nevertheless, its scale, and the attendant changes to the eaves and party wall upstand would combine to create a dominant addition insensitive to the character and appearance of its host dwelling. The proposed development's insensitivity would be exacerbated by the dormers that would be of a proportion and placement out of kilter with the pattern of openings in the appeal building's upper floors.
7. Due to its corner location the proposed development would be widely visible, notwithstanding the roof's inset from the eaves, from a number of viewpoints. Its incongruity would be particularly marked when viewed in the context of the corner building across Hannell Road, which is of similar design and has not undergone the same level of alteration at roof level as envisaged by the appeal scheme. Consequently, the proposed development would read as a visually jarring element in the streetscene and cause considerable harm to its character and appearance.
8. I saw at my site visit the high-rise flats across the road from the appeal site. However, whilst clearly part of the context for the site, they do not provide a precedent for the alterations proposed. I note too that there are mansard extensions in the wider area, however, their presence does not alter my conclusions in respect of the harmfulness of the proposed development to the character and appearance of its host dwelling or its surroundings. Due to the harmful effects of the proposed development in this regard, I consider that it would not provide a pattern for similar alterations to properties elsewhere in the terrace.
9. Thus for the reasons given above the proposed development would cause considerable harm to the character and appearance of its host building and surroundings. As a result it would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hammersmith and Fulham Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy G3 of the Hammersmith and Fulham Development Management Local Plan (adopted July 2013). Taken together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that alterations are compatible with the scale of existing buildings and respect and enhance their townscape context and character.

Other matters

10. The proposed development could provide additional residential space for current and future occupiers, and constitute an intensified and efficient use of previously developed land. However, whilst these would be benefits they would, due to the modest amount of additional space created, be of only limited weight in the overall planning balance.
11. I note that the proposed development could avoid harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of adjacent properties. However, this is merely indicative of a lack of harm in this regard and not a positive benefit of the scheme, and would thus not weigh heavily in favour of the proposed development.

12. I am aware of the affordability issues regarding larger dwellings in the Borough, and the personal circumstances of the appellant who has a strong attachment to the local area. The proposed development could provide extra space for them and their family. However, the creation of additional space in this regard would be a private benefit that would not be of sufficient weight to justify a departure from the policies of the development plan in this instance.
13. I note comments that the roof is in need of repairs, and that the proposed development could improve its insulation, and thus the environmental sustainability of the building. This may be the case, however, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development is the only way of progressing these repairs and improvements. Consequently, these considerations do not weigh in favour of the development to any substantial degree.
14. The proposed development, like any building project, could have some economic benefits, including the creation of construction employment. However, due to the modest scale of the project and the on the whole temporary nature of these benefits they would only carry limited weight in the overall planning balance.
15. Consequently, none of these other matters, either individually or taken together outweigh my conclusions on the main issue in this appeal.

Conclusion

16. In the overall planning balance the proposed development's limited economic, social and environmental benefits are clearly and demonstrably outweighed by the considerable harm it would cause to the character and appearance of the built environment, both in terms of the host building and its surroundings. The appeal scheme would thus not comprise sustainable development for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework. Neither would it meet the requirements of the development plan insofar as the policies that have been drawn to my attention are concerned. No material considerations outweigh the conflicts with the development plan. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G J Fort

INSPECTOR