
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2017

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/16/3164350

Flat B, 253 Munster Road, Hammersmith and Fulham, London SW6 6BS

- 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 Isabel Webber against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2016/02604/FUL, dated 7 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of an additional floor at roof level; erection of privacy screens around part of the flat roof at third floor level to the rear elevation in connection with its use as a terrace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development as it is shown on the appeal form. Whilst this differs from that shown on the planning application form, it most accurately describes the development to which the appeal relates. It is clear that the Council are content with this approach since the same description appears on their decision notice. I have proceeded on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is at the end of an unbroken terrace of three storey buildings with commercial units to the ground floor and residential above. The fenestration to the upper floors as well as the unaltered parapet roof scape create a strong sense of uniformity and are defining characteristics of the street scene. The proposed development would place an extension atop of the existing roof and include a rear projecting enclosed roof terrace.
 5. Whilst sloping away from the front of the building and being built of materials suitable for it, the extension to the roof would be highly noticeable from street level, projecting above the parapet. The visual impression of it would be exacerbated by virtue of the appeal site being an end terrace, making it equally prominent when viewed from Bronsart Road. By virtue of its form, size and siting atop of a building in an unaltered terrace, in a visually exposed location,
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it would appear as an uncharacteristic and intrusive addition, to the detriment of the uniformity of the street scene.

6. In isolation, the roof terrace would not be unduly harmful. It would be less obvious and read in the context of other railings and cycle storage that adorns the roofs of other buildings when viewed from Bronsart Road. Nevertheless, when considered in the context of the roof extension, it would add bulk and mass to the roof scape and thus would add to the harm that I have identified.
7. The proposed development would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the building and the area. Consequently, there would be conflict with Policy BE1 of the Core Strategy¹ and Policy DM G3 of the Local Plan². These Policies, amongst other things and along with the Framework³, seek to ensure that new development (extensions and alterations specifically) are of a high quality design and appearance and respect local context and character.

Other Matters

8. The proposed development would not give rise to any adverse effects on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. This would however have to be the case for the development to be acceptable in any event. It cannot therefore be used to weigh against harm. In addition, the fact that the appeal site is not a listed building or located in a conservation area does not mean an assessment of the effect of proposed development on the character and appearance of a building or area should be any less robust.
9. I am aware from the examples that have been provided and my own observations on site that there are a number of mansard style roof additions in the wider area. The proposed development before me, when compared to them, would be similar in form, size and design. My attention has been specifically drawn to appeal APP/H5390/A/10/2140077 which was allowed in respect of, amongst other things, a roof extension at Number 215 and 217 Munster Road.
10. Whilst the Inspector in this case noted the lack of similar roof additions in the terrace there were factors that set it apart from the scheme before me. The appeal site was a mid-terrace, and the development would be read in the context of other features such as flank extensions on neighbouring properties as well as a box like feature on a roof.
11. The proposed development before me would be sited atop a building which is in a highly prominent end terrace location and part of a substantial run of buildings without roof extensions. Each development proposal is considered entirely on its own merits. Thus, I do not consider that the examples brought to my attention, including the appeal referenced above, are sufficient to justify allowing this appeal.
12. I accept that the additional room that the extension would provide would be beneficial for the appellant as well as the roof terrace improving the provision of external amenity space. However, these matters are not sufficient to overcome the harm that I have identified.

¹ Hammersmith and Fulham Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011

² Hammersmith and Fulham Development Management Local Plan 2013

³ The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR