

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2017

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/17/3167576
20 Shakespeare Road, London, SE24 0LB

- 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 Kirsten Tedder against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/05336/FUL, dated 12 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear infill extension at basement level with new courtyard, and the erection of a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more precise than the application form; I note the Appellant also uses it on the appeal form.

Main issue

3. I consider the main issue to be the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two storey (with semi-basement), mid-terrace dwellinghouse located on the eastern side of Shakespeare Road. The property forms part of an architecturally pleasing terrace of stock brick properties dating from the mid-late 19th Century. The street scene is an interesting and generally harmonious mix of terraces of dwellings together with detached and semi-detached dwellings which display varied roof forms. The properties come together to create a neighbourhood of established residential character with an attractive appearance of quality and local distinctiveness. The proposal is as described above and would provide for revised and additional living space at basement level and a new bedroom and studio at roof level.
 5. The site lies within the Poet's Corner 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 Q22 of the Council's Local Plan 2015 (LP) reflects
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this and adds more detailed criteria designed to ensure the safeguarding of these heritage assets.

6. This terrace, in common with a number found locally, has a horizontal parapet roof line to the street and butterfly London pitched roof behind. It is presently effectively intact in its original form and is an inherent part of the character and attractive aesthetic of this terrace and the wider area. The proposed sizeable mansard extension would radically change the massing, height, shape and visual integrity of the existing roof both to the front and the rear. Local distinctiveness would be lost. The very modest existing elevational variation along this terrace would not justify the relatively major works which are proposed at roof level. I disagree with the Appellant that the mansard would be a positive addition through creating an 'impressive central element' to the terrace. To my mind the harmony of the terrace would be lost and there would be harmful intrusion onto the presently subtle and uniform roofscape.
7. The planned rear extension would make use of a rather valueless external semi-basement area and I can appreciate why new accommodation is being proposed in this general position. However regrettably the scheme put forward lacks the necessary subordinate approach. Rather than seeking to retain the visual distinctiveness of the existing projection the proposal would continue on exactly the same elevational plane, use the same materials and run across both the old and the new areas with substantial and uncharacteristic plate glazing. The development would lack a suitable delicate architectural solution to an extension of this semi-basement on this terrace of merit within a Conservation Area.
8. Having regard to all of the above I conclude that there would be conflict with S72(1) of the Act and LP Policy Q22; there would not be preservation of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additionally, taken together, LP Policies Q5 and Q11 seek high quality design and, amongst other matters, call for extensions to demonstrate subordination; enhancement of the existing built environment; and generally the safeguarding of local distinctiveness. Given the nature of the appeal scheme, I conclude that the proposal would run contrary to these policies as well as the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document Building Alterations and Extensions 2015 which provides detailed design guidance and embodies objectives reflective of the LP policies.

Other matters

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 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 some economic stimulus, 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.
10. I sympathise with the Appellant's wish to extend and improve this dwelling. I recognise that Council advice on the form of mansards has influenced design but the starting point must be whether or not a mansard addition is suitable in

principle. In this location on this terrace I was not at all convinced by the principle. I did note a number of changes, extensions and glazing variations which had taken place locally. I do not know all the circumstances behind these but certainly some stem from a different, earlier, local planning policy regime, a number are as pointed out by the Appellant not of great merit and thus I fail to see why they should be replicated, and others are simply not comparable in terms of form, location or design. In any event I must determine the proposed scheme on its own merits. I can see that thought has gone into the specification of matching materials and I appreciate that residential amenity for neighbours is not an issue in this case. 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.

Overall conclusion

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

D Cramond

INSPECTOR