

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 March 2017

by Roy Merrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 07 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/17/3167041
12 St Augustine's Road, London NW1 9RN

- 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 Nicholas Riddell against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2016/4152/P, dated 26 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is the installation of a single dormer to the roof slope on the side elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of a single dormer to the roof slope on the side elevation at 12 St Augustine's Road, London NW1 9RN in accordance with the application Ref 2016/4152/P, dated 26 July 2016 and subject to the following conditions:-
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 261.110; 261.111; 261.120; 261.121; 261.122; 261.130; 261.200; 261.201; 261.300; 261.301; 261.302; 261.310; 261.311; 261.320; 261.321.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer 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.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and the Camden Square Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is part of a linear and sloping residential street, comprising of large semi-detached buildings that are typically four storeys in height including basement level, although the appeal site is one of a pair of three storey
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buildings. On the respective sides of the street, the buildings display similarity to one another in terms of scale and design including window proportions, entrance steps, centralised chimney stacks and construction materials. There is also a strongly defined common forward building line. This similarity gives the street a strong sense of uniformity and visual rhythm which forms a key characteristic of the CA.

4. The proposed dormer extension, whilst relatively wide, extending almost to the side elevation of the building, and situated close to the edge of the roof plane, would be narrow in form and significantly set back from the front elevation of the building. As such the dormer would be concealed to a large extent, taking into account the presence of an existing parapet wall at eaves level. Whilst it would be seen to a degree from the opposite side of the road, visibility would be fleeting. Furthermore the visual impact of the structure would be mitigated by the colouring of the proposed lead cladding, which would give the structure a recessive quality. In addition, from greater distance further along the street to the north-east, views of the dormer would be screened by the taller adjacent building at No 14 St Augustine's Road, and from the opposite direction would be screened by the appeal building itself.
5. The Council has raised concerns regarding the visual impact of the development on properties situated on Agar Grove to the rear of the site. However, from my visit and the information before me, it is apparent that both from private and public vantage points on that road, the development would be too limited in scale and too far away, and in the latter case screened by intervening buildings, for there to be any material harm.
6. Whilst the side of the street on which the appeal site is located is currently uninterrupted by side dormer extensions, the impression of an area's character is not simply gained by looking at one side of the road in isolation. Rather it is important to consider the wider area. I have taken into account that there are a number of side dormer extensions evident in buildings on the opposite side of the road. From my visit, it seemed to me that these extensions were generally subordinate to the main building and did not detract from the generally uniform character of the street. In addition, it appears from the information before me that similarly designed, though smaller, side dormer extensions are proposed to the apartment block currently under construction at No 3 St Augustine's Road. The proposal would not therefore stand out as an incongruous development.
7. For the above reasons the proposal would not be obtrusive and result in material harm to the appearance of the dwelling or to the uniform character of the street scene. Accordingly the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved. The proposal would therefore conform with Policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Core Strategy 2010; Policies DP24 and DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Development Policies 2010 and Policies D1 and D2 of the emerging Camden Local Plan insofar as they seek to promote the highest standard of design that protects the character of existing buildings and the surrounding area whilst preserving and enhancing Camden's heritage assets. The proposal would not strictly accord with all of the guidelines regarding dormer roof extensions contained in the Council's Design Planning Guidance 2015. However I have concluded for the reasons given above that the development would not result in harm in this case.

Conditions and Conclusion

8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should succeed and planning permission be granted.
9. Conditions specifying the plans and requiring details to be agreed of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the dormer are needed to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Roy Merrett

INSPECTOR