
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 April 2017

by Sue Glover BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/17/3169323

2 St Mary's Avenue, Wanstead, London, E11 2NP

- 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 Gareth Powell and Ms Lisa Stanley against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 4612/16 was refused by notice dated 24 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with a rear hip to gable roof alteration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission granted for a loft conversion with a rear hip to gable roof alteration at 2 St Mary's Avenue, Wanstead, London, E11 2NP, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 4612/16, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: drawing nos. 760 01, 760 02, 760 03, 760 04, 760 05, 760 06, 760 07, 760 08C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed rear gable extension preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Wanstead Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. This part of the conservation area is predominantly characterised by large detached dwellings set back from the street in a spacious and verdant setting. The dwellings for the most part are of a similar design and scale with hipped roofs and prominent front gables and bays.
 4. There is a replacement dwelling of a contemporary design further along the street but this appears to be an anomaly. I am told there have been rear
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extensions to some dwellings but these are largely hidden from public viewpoints and I was not able to see them.

5. No. 2 is unusual in that there are views of the rear of the dwelling from just beyond the conservation area boundary in Langley Drive specifically at the junction with Colebrooke Drive. The 2 roof lanterns on either side of the rear of the house are clearly visible but are set down at a lower level. The original hipped roof at an elevated level is also clearly visible. Permission has been granted for a rear dormer extension.
 6. The proposed rear gable feature would be some 7.6m wide and at a similar height as the main roof. With its extensive glazing it would be a distinctive contemporary feature that would catch the eye. The gable feature however would not be read in the context of the rear elevations of other dwellings along St Mary's Avenue, as these are largely screened by vegetation or buildings, and are in any event further distant.
 7. The gable feature would undoubtedly be seen as a prominent feature in comparison with the traditional hipped roof from a particular viewpoint on Langley Drive, albeit set back at a distance behind the long rear garden. I am mindful that there are no wider vantage points of the rear elevation as it is screened by vegetation or buildings from other parts of Langley Drive. On balance, I find no material harm from an unacceptable dominating visual impact given the setback position from the street, the limited vantage points, and the contextual relationship with other dwellings.
 8. A change in appearance from a traditional hipped roof with a dormer to a contemporary gable feature would not materially harm the spacious character of the area. The character of the front of the host dwelling would be maintained.
 9. Taking all these matters into consideration, I consider that the proposed rear gable feature would preserve the character and appearance of the Wanstead Village Conservation Area. In this respect, I find no conflict with Policy E3 of the Borough Wide Primary Policies, Development Plan Document (BWPP).
 10. There is also no conflict with BWPP Policy BD1, which requires development to be compatible with and contribute to the distinctive character of the area and to contribute to local architecture and design quality. There is no conflict with BWPP Policy BD5 that expects extensions to complement the character of the building, not to dominate the existing building, and to incorporate a roof profile and materials sympathetic to the building.
 11. The development plan objectives are consistent with those set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraphs 17 and 60 of the Framework seek to secure a high quality of design, and to reinforce local distinctiveness. Paragraph 132 of the Framework says that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The proposal meets the objectives of the Framework in these respects.
 12. A condition is necessary in respect of external materials to ensure a satisfactory finished appearance. Standard conditions are also necessary to cover commencement and compliance with the approved plans.
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13.I have taken into account all other matters, including all the policies in the Framework, and other national planning policy and guidance, but I find none that warrant dismissal of this appeal.

Sue Glover

INSPECTOR
