
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

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

Decision date: 17 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/17/3167924
58-60 West Hill, London SW18 1RU

- 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 Kanwar Johal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/2204, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is roof extension to form 1 self-contained flat and associated internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site at 58-60 West Hill forms part of a terrace of three storey buildings which comprise a mixture of commercial premises and residential units. The proposal would create a new roof extension providing one new flat.
 4. The existing terrace is characterised by a series of bay windows at first and second floor levels, with a decorative parapet wall above. There are no visible alterations at roof level. With the exception of a few minor changes to the facades, the block as a whole retains a strong uniformity of appearance.
 5. The proposed extension would be set a short distance behind the parapet wall, and would have a vertical front elevation. The development would be finished in brick and roof tiles, and to that extent would reflect the characteristic materials of the terrace. However, proposed extension would significantly alter the appearance of the appeal site and the terrace. Its bulk at the upper level would unbalance the terrace, appearing neither sympathetic nor subsidiary to the existing properties.
 6. The existing form of the concealed roof behind the parapet wall would be altered, disrupting the uniform appearance of the terrace, and detracting from its overall character. I accept that it would be difficult to see the extension from the footpath immediately next to the terrace. However, it would be partially visible from the footpath on the opposite side of the road. Moreover,
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on my site visit, I saw that the terrace in its entirety is clearly visible from more distant views on West Hill, as it approaches the junction with the South Circular Road from the south-west. From this vantage point in particular, the development would appear as incongruous and out of keeping with the appearance of the terrace.

7. I agree that the proposal would be less prevalent in views from the rear alley and from Cromford Road, but this would not mitigate against its dominant appearance at the front. I accept that, in terms of volume, the proposal would represent approximately 6.7% of the existing volume of the appeal site. However, the visual impact of the proposal would be disproportionate to its volume due to its prominent rooftop location, and its disruption of the regular appearance of the block.
8. I accept also that there are other examples of properties on West Hill which have had mansard roof extensions added. However, the terrace within which Nos 58 and 60 are located appears as a single design whose composition would be harmfully compromised by the development. This is not the case with the examples I have been referred to, whereby the mansards relate more successfully to the individual buildings below. In any case, I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits.
9. I have had regard to the fact that the proposal would not have a negative effect on other dwellings or buildings in the vicinity, and that details of bicycle and waste storage have been provided by the appellant. However, these matters have not led me to a different conclusion on the main issue.
10. Drawing these factors together, I conclude that the development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would thus fail to accord with Policy DMH5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (March 2016), insofar as it requires that roof extensions visible from the street should not be visually intrusive, and should not harm either the street scene or the building's appearance.
11. For the reasons above, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR