

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2017

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 31 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/17/3171630
53 Crestway, London SW15 5DB

- 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 Stuart Moffatt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/6521 was refused by notice dated 29 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new roof extension comprising of three bedrooms and a bathroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a mainly 2-storey detached dwelling within a predominantly residential area. The walls of the main house are largely rendered with a part brick section to the lower front façade. The main roof is tiled with hipped ends. Both front and rear elevations have a 2-storey projection.
 4. The appeal dwelling is located within the Westmead Conservation Area (CA), which has a cohesive residential character notwithstanding the variety of building styles and forms within it. The significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset is derived from its suburban housing that in the vicinity of the site include steeply pitched and largely hipped roofs and 2-storey front projections. When seen from Crestway, the hipped roofs appear to be largely unaltered and these add to the sense of space between buildings that stand side-by-side and generally emphasise the prominence of the front projections. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
 5. The proposal is to enlarge the appeal dwelling by raising the main eaves level and introducing a mansard style roof with new dormers and gables to the front and rear of the building. In combination, these changes would significantly add
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- to the scale and bulk of the dwelling at roof level and fundamentally alter its shape and general appearance. When taken together, the proposed additions and alterations would be on a scale that would visually dominate the front and rear facades and unduly compromise the original built form. As a result, the proposal would undermine the traditional style and character of the dwelling.
6. In particular, the new mansard style roof, which would replace the distinctive hipped roof of the existing dwelling, would be a new and prominent feature when seen from the road. From this vantage point, the considerable scale and bulk of the new roof would give the finished dwelling an awkward top-heavy appearance. That a sizeable gable would be placed above the existing front projection and a long continuous ridgeline introduced roughly parallel to the road would visually accentuate the mass of the proposal. The undue dominance and excessive bulk of the proposed development would also be evident from the adjacent rear gardens. For all of these reasons, the proposal would spoil the intrinsic character of the appeal property and have a deleterious effect on the character and appearance of the CA, which would fail to be preserved. I attach considerable importance and weight to this harm.
 7. Policy DMH 5 of the Wandsworth Local Development Framework Development Management Policies Document (DMPD) states that extensions should be well designed and should not be so large as to dominate and compete with the original building. It also requires roof extensions to be sympathetic to the style of the building and not visually intrusive. The proposal would not adhere to these important principles. In reaching this conclusion, I note that the visible elements of the new roof would be pitched and that the external materials would match those of the existing dwelling.
 8. I saw that several properties in the local area have been extended and externally altered at roof level although most examples, including those with dormers, were appropriate in design and size for their context. Particular reference is also made to the adjacent property, which is 55 Crestway that has been significantly altered and extended. However, I do not have the full details of this case and so I cannot be certain that the particular circumstances are the same or very similar to the appeal scheme. In any event, each proposal should be considered on its own merits. Having done so, I find that the appeal scheme is objectionable for the reasons given.
 9. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a conservation area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Although the harm to the CA would be less than substantial in this case, I am not persuaded that the public benefits of the development, primarily through the support given to the local economy during the construction phase would outweigh this harm.
 10. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the local area. Accordingly, it conflicts with DMPD Policies DMS 1, DMS 2 and DMH 5, which require the development to achieve a high quality design and to conserve or enhance the significance and character of the heritage asset. The proposal is also at odds with a core principle of the Framework, which is to always seek to

secure high quality design. There would also be a conflict with the Framework regarding the protection of heritage assets and with the statutory duty.

11. A high level of thermal insulation can be expected of the finished building that in turn would improve the energy efficiency of the dwelling. There would be no infilling of the space between No 53 and those on either side. Good-sized gardens would also remain with the new built form in place. The additional living accommodation would enhance the living conditions of the appellant and his family, with an improved outlook and no harm caused to the residential amenity of others. However, none of these considerations outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue.
12. I also note that the proposal was refined in the light of advice given by Officers at the pre-application stage and that the appellant considers that the concerns raised by the Council at that time were addressed and resolved in the application submission.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR