
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2017

by Elizabeth Pleasant DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/D/16/3165834
26 Chepstow Villas, London W11 2QZ

- 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 Rodney Powell against the decision of The Council of The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.
 - The application Ref PP/16/06095, dated 15 September 2016, was refused by a notice dated 15 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of new balustrade.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application the subject of this appeal proposed two alternative materials of construction/design for the balustrade, glass or wrought iron railings. The appellant has confirmed that the appeal proposal is for a balustrade constructed from wrought iron railings as shown on Drawing No: 102, Proposed Second Floor Plan & Elevation. The local planning authority made their decision on the basis of this drawing, and so have I.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and Pembridge Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The host property occupies a prominent position on the corner of Chepstow Villas and Ledbury Road, and is situated within Pembridge Conservation Area. The existing side extension is set back from the main frontage of No 26, and I agree with the previous Inspector that it is not readily visible when approaching the appeal site along Chepstow Villas from the west. However, despite some screening from the tree in the front garden, the extension and indeed the proposed balustrade would be clearly visible when viewed from Chepstow Crescent and Ledbury Road.
 5. Chepstow Villas is characterised by properties with pitched or flats roofs which are predominantly concealed from view at street level by their parapet walls or deep and decorative eaves. Consequently, the properties display a robust form which is accentuated by their strong and uninterrupted eaves line.
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6. I accept that wrought iron railings are a traditional feature of many properties within the Conservation Area. However, in general they are found at street level, where they enclose forecourt garden areas, or they are a decorative feature designed as part of the original composition of the property's façade. On my visit to the site, I saw no other examples of railings affixed to parapet walls at roof level, and none of the other examples of railings in the area provided by the appellant are directly comparable¹.
7. The introduction of railings at roof level would appear visually incongruous, and would detract from the property's simple robust form and clean roofline, which currently makes a positive contribution to the Pembridge Conservation Area. I recognise that the Council has approved a roof terrace enclosed by wrought iron railings above a first floor extension at the rear of the property; however this would not be visible from the street or to public views from within the Conservation Area.
8. I have taken into consideration the appellant's desire to effectively utilise the roof area, and I understand that if so desired it would be possible to place structures, including plant pots, as an alternative means of enclosing this space. However, I am mindful that the harm that I have identified by this proposal would be permanent and is not outweighed by this potential 'fallback' position.
9. I conclude that the appeal proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and Pembridge Conservation Area. It would cause less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area as a heritage asset. This harm is not outweighed by any public benefit. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment, and conflicts with Policies CL1, CL2, CL3, CL6, C9 and C11 of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Consolidated Local Plan, 2015 (Local Plan) which seek, amongst other things, to achieve good design which respects its existing context, reinforce the character and integrity of the original building, contribute positively to the townscape, protect and enhance views, and preserve the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

Conclusion

10. For the reason given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elizabeth Pleasant

INSPECTOR

¹ Appendix 3, Statement of Case for the Appellant.