

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 19 June 2017

by Peter Rose BA MRTPI DMS MCMi

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

Decision date: 30th June 2017

Appeal A Ref: APP/F5540/Y/17/3167552

68, Grove Park Terrace, Chiswick, London W4 3JL

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Cockett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref: 00528/68/L9, dated 17 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2016.
 - The works proposed are new part single, part two-storey and glazed lantern extension to rear with extended lower terrace and steps. Installation of metal glazed sliding doors to garage rear elevation. Minor internal alterations to upper and lower ground floors.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/F5540/W/17/3166802

68, Grove Park Terrace, Chiswick, London W4 3JL

- 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 and Mrs Cockett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref: 00528/68/P7, dated 17 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is new part single, part two-storey and glazed lantern extension to rear with extended lower terrace and steps. Installation of metal glazed sliding doors to garage rear elevation. Minor internal alterations to upper and lower ground floors.
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Decisions

1. **Appeal A** and **Appeal B** are each dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are:

(a) the effect of the proposed works upon the special architectural and historic interest of No 68 and No 70 Grove Park Terrace W4, a Grade II listed building and, in particular, whether the works would preserve the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and;

(b) the effect of the proposed works upon the character and appearance of the Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area (the Conservation Area) and, in particular, whether the scheme would preserve or enhance its character or appearance.

Reasons

Listed building

3. The appeal site comprises a large, extended house. It was originally constructed together with No 70 as one of two matching semi-detached dwellings, and these are statutorily listed as Grade II.
4. The significance of the appeal site as part of a building of special architectural or historic interest relates to its contribution to this distinguished pair of early nineteenth century houses. Notwithstanding previous alterations, the dwellings remain of a period design and display a range of impressive architectural and historic features, including brick facades, slate roofs and other detailing.
5. The heritage analysis set out in the appellants' Planning, Heritage Design and Access Statement June 2016 identifies how the appeal site has been subject to significant alterations and extension over time which have altered its internal layout, and also changed aspects of its appearance to the rear. The appeal site has been enlarged to the side, its historic plan form and fenestration have been altered, and the rear garden has also been extended.
6. Whilst these changes have undoubtedly disrupted the detailed symmetry and historic form of the dwellings, the original main rear elevations to No 68 and No 70 have remained largely unextended towards their gardens. The rears of the dwellings still generally reflect their original historic form and broadly retain a significant degree of relative uniformity in terms of building style and features. Although the frontage is the principal elevation, the rear of the appeal site remains an inherent and physically significant element of the listed asset.
7. A similar scheme to that subject to this appeal has been previously authorised by the Council but has yet to be implemented¹. The approved scheme and that now subject to appeal follow a broadly similar modern design approach, but with key differences. These include a further lantern section of extension to the appeal scheme which would occupy a central, elevated position to the rear façade. It would be of a glazed lightweight appearance to limit its visual prominence and would link similarly proposed glazed elements either side.
8. The lantern element would be positioned in front of a non-original central window but, as this section of extension is proposed to be frameless and fully transparent, the window and brickwork would be intended to remain visible through the glass. The outer frame of the proposed extensions below and to the sides of the lantern seek to allow the lantern section to be read as a separate and more lightweight secondary element. The wider fenestration has also been reviewed in pursuit of a more even distribution to the massing.
9. Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) places a duty upon the decision-maker, in considering applications for listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building. A similar duty relating to applications for planning permission is set out in section 66.
10. Historic England previously advised in its publication, London terrace houses 1660-1860 A guide to alterations and extensions February 1996 that

¹ Council Refs: 00528/68/P6 and 00528/68/L8 granted 29 July 2015

extensions should never dominate the parent building in bulk, scale, materials or design. It stated that the most appropriate solution for extensions will normally be to use a traditional design employing the existing architectural vocabulary of the parent building to ensure that the new work is integrated harmoniously with the character of the building as a whole. It still recognised, however, that there may be some occasions where a modern design approach may be acceptable, and I find no reason why, in principle, some such contrasting but necessarily sympathetic form of design, and of an appropriate scale, should not be appropriate in this instance.

11. Even so, the scheme as now proposed would involve three relatively distinct glazed elements and each of a substantial size. Whilst the elements are consistent in aspects of detailing, I find that the distinct physical form of each, allied to their cumulative scale, would make for, in overall terms, a visually jarring and unduly dominant feature which would be neither subordinate to the proportions nor sympathetic to the character of the host building. In effect, the scheme would unbalance and clutter the rear elevation and appear intrusive.
12. Although I find that the proposed glazed sliding doors to the previously extended side would be at odds with the fenestration to the main building, they would replace existing modern doors. Whilst seeking to replace with a more contemporary design of neutral impact, I find that this aspect of the scheme, in the context of the scale and already contrasting style of the proposed adjacent extensions, would further distance the proposal from the original historic form of the house. The previously approved timber framed doors, by reason of their more historically consistent form and design, would be far more sympathetic to the preservation of the building.
13. Whilst the scheme seeks to ensure retention of internal features of historic value, and to respect the plan form of the existing building, there would still be some further significant loss of historic fabric, particularly in connection with the rear wall and arising from internal reconfigurations.
14. In summary, I find the scheme, with particular regard to the lantern element, to the replacement sliding doors and to loss of historic fabric, would harm the heritage significance of the Grade II listed building at No 68 and No 70 Grove Park Terrace W4 by reducing its visual integrity and by detracting from its historic form.
15. Accordingly, the scheme would be contrary to the development plan. In particular, Policy CC1 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 seeks for all new development to conserve and take opportunities to enhance special qualities and heritage. Policy CC2 aims to retain and support high quality urban design and architecture, and Policy CC4 seeks to conserve and take opportunities to enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets as a positive means of supporting an area's distinctive character and sense of history.
16. I consider these development plan policies to be broadly consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and requires them to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance². The Framework further states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on

² Paragraph 126

the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation³.

Conservation Area

17. Section 72 of the Act places a duty upon the decision-maker in considering applications for, amongst other things, listed building consent and planning permission, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
18. The distinctive qualities and accompanying significance of the surrounding Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area relate to its historical development besides the water's edge, and to the subsequent addition of further houses from the late eighteenth century, as detailed in the Council's Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Guidance February 1997 (the Conservation Area SPG). Notwithstanding variations in architectural detailing, this particular part of the Conservation Area is significantly characterised by not dissimilar buildings to the appeal site and which collectively contribute to an impressive sense of local distinctiveness.
19. Although the rear of the appeal site has very little public exposure, it still forms part of the Conservation Area and, notwithstanding previous alterations, the original building remains largely intact as a significant contributing feature.
20. As with my conclusions in relation to the listed building, I find that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be similarly harmed by the proposed works. Even though harm to the Conservation Area as a whole would be modest, the existing contribution of the appeal site to the Conservation Area would be diminished, and the expectations of the Act would not be met. The Framework also places great importance upon good design and upon the significance of local distinctiveness⁴.
21. I therefore conclude that the proposed works would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area. Accordingly, the scheme would be contrary to the same policies of the development plan and expectations of the Framework already referred to above. The Council's Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Guidance Adopted October 2003 (the Extension SPG) also advises that development in Conservations Areas must have regard to, amongst other things, scale and proportion within and around the site, and identifies a need for extensions, more generally, to be secondary to the original house.

Other matters

22. I have noted references made to other schemes elsewhere, but full such details are not before me. The planning circumstances of any individual site and of any proposed scheme will be different from others, and each proposal and site must be considered with reference to its own particular merits. Further, I have no reason to find that the circumstances of development elsewhere would necessarily mitigate the particular harm that would arise in this instance.
23. I have had regard to the concerns of neighbouring residents relating to future living conditions, and to the Council's response. The authority raises no

³ Paragraph 132

⁴ Paragraphs 56 and 60

objection in this regard and, in light of the evidence presented, I have little reason to conclude otherwise, or to find harm in relation to any other aspects of the scheme beyond those cited in the Council's decision notices.

24. Whilst no formal objection has been cited by the Council, I consider its concerns regarding future maintenance of the green roof to be largely unfounded given the likely low maintenance qualities of sedum and possibilities for regulation by planning conditions should that eventuality arise.
25. I have considered all other matters raised, but I find nothing of sufficient weight, individually or cumulatively, to outweigh the harms identified.

Planning balance

26. I find that the special interest of the designated assets would be diminished such that the proposed scheme would fail to preserve the listed building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
27. The Framework makes a distinction between a proposal causing substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a listed building or Conservation Area, and a scheme that would lead to less than substantial harm⁵. I find the harm arising to the designated assets in this instance, whilst of a serious nature, to be less than substantial, and the Framework requires such a scale to be weighed against the possible public benefits of the scheme, including securing its optimum viable use⁶.
28. There is no evidence that the existing dwelling could not continue as a viable family home in the absence of the works. The public benefits would principally involve creation of a larger and more luxurious dwelling for the local housing stock. Even so, I find no overall public benefits sufficient to outweigh the harm which would arise from the scheme as a whole to the listed building and Conservation Area.
29. The duties arising under sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act make strong presumptions against proposals incurring harm and thereby not preserving a designated asset. This is because the desirability of preservation is a consideration to which special attention must be paid as a statutory duty, and must be regarded as a matter of considerable importance and weight in any planning balance. I find that the scheme would fall significantly short of the expectations these duties.
30. Further, I find the proposal would not accord with the development plan as a whole, and nor with the expectations of sustainable development set out in the Framework⁷.

Conclusions

31. For the above reasons, **Appeal A** and **Appeal B** are each dismissed.

Peter Rose
INSPECTOR

⁵ Paragraph 134

⁶ Paragraph 134

⁷ Paragraph 6