



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 June 2017

by C Jack BSc(Hons) MA MA(TP) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/17/3172408

Waterford House, 4 Newman Road, Bromley, BR1 1RJ

- 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 Park Rutland Investments (London) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The undated application Ref DC/16/05473/FULL1, received by the Council on 30 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of existing roof space to form a one bedroom and a two bedroom apartment with insertion of dormer windows, inset dormer balcony and stair enclosure.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of existing roof space to form a one bedroom and a two bedroom apartment with insertion of dormer windows, inset dormer balcony and stair enclosure at Waterford House, 4 Newman Road, Bromley, BR1 1RJ in accordance with the terms of the undated application, Ref DC/16/05473/FULL1, received by the Council on 30 November 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: OS Location Plan; Drawing S/03; Section and Proposed Roof Plan; Drawing P/01; Drawing P/02; Drawing P/03; and Drawing P/04.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on Drawing P/04.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Waterford House is a purpose-built former office building which has recently been converted to residential flats under the prior approval procedure. The building is situated in a small row of similar office type buildings and occupies a roughly triangular plot at the end of Newman Road, a small side road off the main Tweedy Road A21. On the opposite side of Newman Road is a substantial sorting office and another modern office building. Behind Waterford House there is an area of garages and car parking, with the rear gardens of the

residential properties in Palace Grove beyond. The area generally is of very mixed character and appearance, with a variety of types, ages and styles of buildings in multiple uses with various dormers present, albeit not currently on buildings in Newman Road. I saw that facilities including the shopping area of central Bromley and Bromley North train station are nearby.

4. It is proposed to provide two additional flats in the roof of the building, facilitated by the addition of various dormers and a rooflight. The existing building has an expansive but nondescript hipped roof profile. As the building has four storeys and Newman Road is relatively short and narrow, the roof is not readily visible from that road. It is visible from Tweedy Road, across the sorting office parking area, from where two dormers of fairly modest scale in relation to the principal north-west roof slope would be visible, together with one roof light and the two dormers proposed on the south-west roof slope.
5. The dormers on the south-west elevation would be somewhat larger than those to the north-west. Nonetheless, they would be mainly glazed, giving a fairly lightweight appearance, and they would be recessed behind a glass balustrade and set notably below the main ridge of the roof. These two dormers would face towards the side if the adjacent office building but, like the smaller dormers and the roof light on the north-west elevation, they would be visible from a short section of Tweedy Road. However, the building is well set back from Tweedy Road and therefore the development would not be significantly prominent. Furthermore, the dormers on the north-west and south-west elevations would be predominantly glazed and would appear subservient to the roof slopes in public views.
6. The roughly triangular dormer in the north-east elevation would occupy only a modest proportion of the roof slope. It would not be visible in any significant public views, although it would be visible from the rear of some properties in Palace Grove and parts of the garage and parking area at the end of Newman Road. The style and fenestration of this dormer differs significantly from the others proposed but, due to its modest scale and the varied roof profiles nearby, this would have no significant effect on the character or appearance of the area. Furthermore, the fenestration of this dormer would be generally consistent in style, scale and alignment with that of the side elevation beneath it.
7. The largest dormer would be positioned in the south-east roof slope. This would be clearly visible from parts of Palace Grove, including the car park there. However, the street scene in this location includes a wide variety of roofs, including dormers and mansards. Furthermore, Waterford House is well set back from Palace Grove, and the dormer would not unduly dominate the expansive roof slope or the host building generally, and therefore it would not appear disproportionately prominent in public views from there.
8. For these reasons, I consider that while the proposed dormers would significantly alter the roof profile of Waterford House, they would nonetheless be subservient to the existing roof and the host building generally. Thus, the scheme would not significantly alter the character of the host building or be so out of character in this area of mixed building types as to result in harm to the character and appearance of the area generally. In forming this view I have considered that the fenestration in most of the dormers would not match that of the main building in proportions or alignment. Nevertheless, as these

dormers would be set back somewhat from the main elevations, would be predominantly glazed, and would generally only be seen in longer views and against a varied backdrop, I am also of the view that this would not amount to harm to the overall character and appearance of the building or the wider area.

9. The dormers would therefore be generally consistent with the requirements of the Council's adopted Residential Design Guidance 2004 (SPG2), which notes that dormers are common in many parts of the borough. It specifically advises that large or dominant dormers which would harm the overall appearance of the building should be avoided.
10. In light of the above, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. I find no conflict with saved Policy BE1 of the Bromley Unitary Development Plan 2006, which seeks a high standard of design including that development should not detract from the street scene or important views and should complement the scale, form, layout and materials of adjacent buildings and areas. This policy pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the Framework) but it is generally consistent with the aims of good design set out in section 7 and I have therefore attributed substantial weight to it for the purposes of this appeal.

Conditions

11. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans as this provides certainty. A materials condition is necessary in the interests of character and appearance.

Conclusion

12. For these reasons, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Catherine Jack

INSPECTOR