
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 June 2017

by Caroline Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/17/3172695

1 Newby Street, London SW8 3BQ

- 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 Will Houston against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/06498/FUL, dated 7 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2017.
 - The development was originally described as 'loft conversion'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development on the Council's decision notice and the appeal form reads as 'erection of mansard roof extension incorporating a rear dormer and installation of 2 front rooflights'. I consider this a more accurate description of the proposed development than that above which was taken from the application form and have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wandsworth Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The site is located on the outer edge of the Wandsworth Road Conservation Area (WRCA) which contains three islands of development comprising mainly 19th century development. There are a wide range of attractive buildings of different periods with historic and architectural value. The significance of the WRCA is derived largely from the contribution of the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of historic buildings.
5. The appeal property is an end of terrace 2 storey property with basement. Newby Street falls steeply away from Wandsworth Road with the simple terraced properties either side of the road following the fall in level. Despite architectural variances, the properties are all of homogenous character constructed in yellow stock brick with render detailing, some of which have been painted. The terraced properties on Newby Street, including the appeal

property, have traditional London roofs which are largely intact with a straight parapet wall to the front and 'butterfly' roof to the rear. Despite the difference in levels, such features are visually distinctive and make for a regular street scape. This pleasing rhythm and established residential character and appearance positively contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Mansard roofs are not a feature of the area.

6. The proposal would result in a mansard roof structure above and behind the existing parapet wall extending the full width of the dwelling above first floor and extending to a flat roof dormer at the rear. By reason of the roof extension the 'butterfly' roof would be lost.
7. The Council's Building Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) states that London roofs are a part of Lambeth's and London's local distinctiveness and that the loss of such roofs on heritage assets will be resisted. The proposal would result in the unacceptable loss of a traditional London roof and introduce an uncharacteristic roof form close to the front and rear of the building. Whether or not the proposed rear dormer accords with the guidance in the SPD, the loss of the 'butterfly' roof to the rear would destroy an important element of the character and appearance of these dwellings. Together with its height, the proposal would result in a bulky and dominant addition to the dwelling at odds with the prevailing roof design within the locality. For these reasons, it would compromise the architectural integrity of the building and the roofscape of the terrace and its contribution to the WRCA.
8. The appeal proposal and its harmful impact on the host property and terrace would be highly visible from Newby Street as well as from Wandsworth Road. It would also be visible from outside the Conservation Area from the housing estate to the rear on Daley Thomson Way. As a consequence, the appeal proposal would adversely affect views both into and from within the WRCA materially harming its character and appearance. Thus the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the WRCA. The finding of harm to the character and appearance of a heritage asset is a consideration to which I must attach considerable importance and weight.
9. I have taken into account the appellant's assertion that mansard roofs are a traditional form of roof construction throughout the Borough. However, no examples have been put before me. Furthermore, from my observations on site they are not commonplace in the locality of the appeal site and I have concluded that the loss of the London roof would be unacceptable in this particular case. The appeal site lies within a designated heritage asset, whether or not it is within a prominent part. In any event, the proposal does not accord with the design advice within paragraph 4.25 of the SPD. I also note that the parapet walls would be reinstated and that the building line and building below the roof would not be altered. Nevertheless, these matters are not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified.
10. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon me to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Although I have found that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the WRCA, given the size and scale of the proposal within the Conservation Area as a whole, the harm to the significance of the heritage asset would be less than substantial. Thus, it is necessary to

consider, in accordance with paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, whether there would be any public benefits to the scheme sufficient to outweigh that harm. Whilst the proposal would be of benefit to the appellant in providing extra accommodation, this is not a public benefit as such and the benefits are insufficient to outweigh the harm identified.

11. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with Policies Q5, Q11 and Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan (2015) and the guidance within the SPD. When considered together these policies seek to ensure that development should be responsive to positive aspects of the local context, historic character and original features, including roofscapes. This includes respecting, retaining and reinforcing the positive features of locally distinct buildings that make a contribution to the historic significance of heritage assets, including Conservation Areas.

Conclusion

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

Caroline Jones

INSPECTOR