
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2017

by Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/17/3173267
58 Larkhall Lane, London SW4 6SP

- 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 Ms Claire Jostins against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/07158/FUL, dated 23 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a rear extension to upper ground floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The extension has been substantially completed and therefore I am considering this appeal retrospectively.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the host building and the Larkhall Conservation Area (LCA).

Reasons

4. Sited on a residential road within the LCA, the appeal site is a Victorian three storey, end of terrace dwelling featuring a London roof and London stock brick walls. It has a 'semi-basement' with a short flight of steps leading to a recessed entrance porch. It includes traditional features, such as decorative brick detailing and sliding sash windows. The significance of the conservation area is derived from the slow, evolutionary development which has resulted in a pleasant, informal townscape featuring a progression of architectural styles throughout the 19th century.
5. The appeal proposal seeks consent for a rear extension to the upper ground floor, which is sited on top of the lower ground floor single storey rear extension. The extension is constructed from rendered walling with a slate mono-pitched roof. The single storey rear extension was granted planning permission by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in 2016 (Ref. 16/03020/FUL). I note that the single storey extension should have been predominantly constructed from brick, but has been rendered together with the first floor

appeal proposal. There are other examples of two storey extensions to the rear within the terrace row. A significant majority are constructed from brick.

6. Whilst the LPA raised concerns in relation to the weathering and maintenance burden of the use of render, the appellant details that the technical specification means that it is 'self-cleaning'. Nonetheless, the use of render in the proposal does not match the host dwelling, and irrespective of its technology, I find that its use in this specific context is noticeable, unsympathetic and incongruous to the host building. I also noted that there is a lack of detailing to the rear window, featuring no brick header or sliding sash. Together, I find that these elements of the proposal fail to authentically reproduce the original architecture, materials and detailing on this building within the LCA. The extension does not respect or reinforce the established positive characteristics of the host building, and does not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the LCA.
7. The roof pitch slopes the opposite way to the other pitched two storey outrigger extensions in the terrace row. Whilst this does appear slightly at odds with the other extensions in the terrace row, given the existing London roof, which features a 'butterfly' pitch with central valley, and the end terrace 'book end' location; I do not consider that the roof design is harmful to the host building, preserving the character and appearance of the LCA.
8. Whilst I have found there to be no material harm from the roof design, I have found that the use of render and lack of fenestration detailing does cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building. Consequently, the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the LCA, conflicting with Policies Q2, Q5, Q8, Q11 and Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan (2015) and Policies 7.4 and 7.8 of The London Plan (2016). These policies seek, amongst other things, to ensure that the local distinctiveness of Lambeth is sustained and reinforced through new development, extensions positively respond to the host building, visual amenity is not unacceptably compromised and development proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas. I also find conflict with the Supplementary Planning Document Building Alterations and Extension (2015) and the Larkhall Conservation Area Statement (2012) (LCAS).

Other Matters

9. The appellant's agent has detailed that the appeal property is not specifically identified within the LCAS, however, the absence of a detailed reference does not make it any less worthy of preserving or enhancing through its conservation area designation as a heritage asset.
10. I have taken account of the fact that the development is at the rear of the site, and whilst the appeal development is screened to a large degree from public viewpoints, it is visible from the dwellings on Priory Grove. Furthermore, the site is within a conservation area, and any alterations should enhance or preserve the setting of this site regardless of how visible they are from public view.
11. I note the appellant's agent has detailed that render is widely used in the area and that due to the scale of the extension; it would appear subservient, marking it as a contemporary addition. However, I find that due to the

traditional design, it is not a 'contemporary' addition, and as such, should feature materials which authentically reproduce the original brick.

12. I also note that the extension at 56 Larkhall Lane is constructed from render walls with a timber clad single storey element. This use of materials and lack of fenestration detailing serve to confirm that this proposal is not in keeping with the host dwelling. I too observed the extension at 63 Priory Grove, a detached three storey dwelling. This extension is finished in render, however, I find that it has a very contemporary, modern design and has many other differences to the scheme before me. In reference to all other examples mentioned by the appellant's agent, some of which I viewed on site, I do not have the full details before me and in any event, each proposal falls to be considered on its own particular merits and that is what I have done here.

Conclusion

13. The statutory duty in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is a matter of considerable importance and weight. I find that the proposal would harm the significance of LCA, leading to 'less than substantial harm' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no identified public benefits that would outweigh the harm.
14. Having had regard to all other matters raised, and for the reasons above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR