



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2017

by **Peter D Biggers** BSc Hons MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/D/17/3172899

8 Tredegar Road, London E3 2EH

- 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 James Perkins against the decision of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council.
 - The application Ref PA/16/03750, dated 22 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is new dormer roof extension at the rear of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The submitted plans include designs for basement alterations to the appeal property but inasmuch as these already have planning permission it is only the rear dormer roof extension that is before me in this case.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed dormer windows on the character and appearance of the host property, Tredegar Road and the Medway Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Tredegar Road on its south side, where the appeal site is located, takes the form of a residential terrace of 4 storey properties (including basement and attic floor) built in a traditional style in brick, with slate or tile roofs. The terrace has a repeating ground floor and basement bay window detail, entrance stair and a repeating pitched roof dormer in a traditional style in a central position on each roof. These features create a uniform rhythm to the street frontage and an attractive character to the tree-lined street.
 5. With regard to the rear roof slope, although a number of the properties have roof lights including No 8, the roofs typically do not feature dormer windows and the uniformity of the rear roof plane, only interrupted by chimney stacks and raised party wall upstands, is a key feature of the terrace.
 6. I have been referred to a number of other examples of roof extensions, in particular those at Nos 2 and 4 Tredegar Road which the appellant states serve to demonstrate that rear dormer extensions would not be inappropriate in the terrace. However I am not persuaded that it is entirely a relevant approach to say that because alterations to the roof feature elsewhere it is necessarily appropriate in
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this case. The alterations at Nos 2 and 4 are in any event the exception rather than the rule in what is otherwise a very uniform rear elevation and therefore do not set a precedent. Moreover they are to a completely different design to that proposed in this case. I have therefore considered the appeal case on its own merits.

7. Whereas the existing front dormer is proportionate to the roof slope and a feature of the original design, the proposal for the rear, featuring a twin-pitched roof dormer would occupy the majority of the roof slope, dominating the rear roofscape of the terrace. The smaller dormer, I acknowledge, is similar in scale to that on the front but the larger dormer juxtaposed with it would appear odd and the fenestration would be disproportionate to the windows below. Usually windows decrease in scale the higher in the building they are but in this case the larger dormer window would be at least as wide as that on the floor below and as it would be wider than it is tall would appear disproportionate.
8. It has been put to me that this visual impact would not matter because the dormers would be to the rear and the significance of the rear of the terrace is less than that to the front and in line with paragraph 126 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. I acknowledge that the rear of the terrace would not be as prominent but the proposed dormers would be fully visible from the neighbouring gardens along the terrace. I accept that these would be private realm views. However, the impact of the development on character and appearance in these views is nevertheless important, as the character of an area and its significance is not solely dependent on what can be seen from the public realm. In any event it was clear from my visit that there are also railway tracks elevated above the property on its south side which would afford a clear view of the proposal from the public realm.
9. In this context the twin dormer roof extension would appear as an alteration that is out of keeping with the character of the host property. A regular uniformity is a characteristic of the Medway Conservation Area which the Medway Conservation Area Appraisal states was "*designated to protect the overall character of the Victorian Bow terraces, which are of collective townscape merit*". The CAA states that terraces such as these are "*designed to be uniform and regular in appearance, relying on the repetition of simple elements and a consistency of materials and details for the overall effect*".
10. The proposal would disrupt this uniformity and therefore would fail to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance. As such the proposal would be contrary to Paragraph 131 and 132 in the Framework, Policy 7.8 of the *London Plan* and *Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework* policies SP10 and DM27 which seek to ensure development conserves the significance of heritage assets and preserves or enhances the Conservation Area.
11. I accept that in this proposal the harm to the significance of the heritage asset would be less than substantial and, in these cases, Paragraph 134 of the Framework requires that the harm is weighed against any public benefit. The appellant argues that the proposal better allows the property to be used as a family home, improving the space available and the height over the access stair to the attic floor and in that way makes optimal use of his home improving economic sustainability, objectives which are encouraged in the Framework. However I am not persuaded that this would be a sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area in this case.

Conclusions

12. I have considered the matters before me and, notwithstanding the fact that living conditions would be unaffected and living space would be improved, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P. D. Biggers

INSPECTOR