
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2017

by I Jenkins BSc CEng MICE MCIWEM

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

Decision date: 8th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/D/17/3176402

3 Ryecroft Street, London, SW6 3TP

- 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 Regis Guichard & Su Mei Ong against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2017/00411/FUL, dated 2 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion including 2 conservation style roof lights on the front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the pair of properties comprising Nos. 3 and 1 Ryecroft Street and the Studdridge Street Conservation Area, within which they are located.

Reasons

3. The street scene at the junction of Ryecroft Street with Bowerdean Street is characterised by rows of terraced houses, which for the most part are two-storeys below eaves level with shared front gable features. However, in a number of locations the ends of terraces feature a pair of 3 storey houses, the front elevations of which are markedly different in design from their front gabled neighbours. These include Nos. 1 and 3 Ryecroft Street, each of which has a 2-storey front bay feature topped by an ornate balustrade. I saw that the pair has a shallow hipped roof with decorative ridge tiles, the profile of which can be seen from a number of street level vantage points. The common features of the pair, including the hipped roof form, gives it a predominantly balanced appearance, which contributes to the joint value of the 2 properties as an end of terrace feature in a prominent location.
 4. I understand that No. 3 is not a Listed Building, has not been formally identified by the Council as a 'building of merit' and is not mentioned specifically in the Council's Studdridge Street Character Profile. Nonetheless, I consider that, for the reasons set out above, the pair comprising Nos. 1 and 3, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Other examples of similar end of terrace pairs include Nos. 18 and 20
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- Ryecroft Street, opposite No. 3, and Nos. 2 and 4 Bowerdean Street, to the rear of No. 1 Ryecroft Street.
5. Section 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* requires, in exercise of planning functions, that *special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area*.
 6. Furthermore, Design Policy 31 of the Council's *Planning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document-July 2013* (SPD) identifies that extensions should be appropriate to the architectural character of the building and should not have a significant effect on the character of the Conservation Area. SPD Design Policy 32 indicates that front roof extensions are generally unacceptable and rear roof extensions should be sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area. The reasoned justification for the Policy identifies that existing roof lines should not be disturbed and original features such as decorative ridge roof tiles should be retained. SPD Design Policy 33 confirms that the loss of hipped roofs will be resisted. SPD Design Policy 34 indicates that the design of rear extensions should be in keeping with the architectural character of the existing property and Conservation Area.
 7. The proposal involves the extension of the roof of No. 3 from a hip to a gable, incorporating a flat roofed rear dormer. The proposed hip to gable extension would unbalance the roof line of Nos. 1 and 3 and would result in the loss of the decorative ridge tiles associated with the hip side slope. I acknowledge that mansard roofs and rear dormers are not unusual in the vicinity of the appeal site. However, the proposed rear dormer would have a vertical rear wall, unlike the sloping profile of neighbouring mansard roofs. Furthermore, in most of the cases I saw, rear dormers are set back from the alignment of the main rear wall of the building and set well in from the side boundaries of the property. In contrast, the vertical rear face of the proposed dormer would align with the main back wall of the house and extend across almost the entire width of its roof. This large projection would be clearly visible from Bowerdean Street, from where it would be seen together with the shallow rear roof slope of the hipped roof of No. 1 and would have an awkward appearance. I consider overall, that the proposed roof extension would be an unduly dominant and obtrusive addition to the property and it would conflict with the requirements of SPD Design Policies 31, 32, 33 and 34.
 8. I conclude that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the pair of properties comprising Nos. 3 and 1 Ryecroft Street and it would harm the character and appearance of the Studdridge Street Conservation Area. Therefore, the scheme would conflict with Policies DM G3 and DM G7 of the *Hammersmith & Fulham Council Development Management Local Plan, July 2013*, as well as Policy BE1 of the *Hammersmith and Fulham Council Core Strategy-October 2011*. Between them, those Policies seek to ensure a high standard of design and require account to be taken of local character and the impact on the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, in keeping with the aims of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework).
 9. I consider that, although notable, the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial, as the proposed development would affect a single property and the vantage points from which

it would be seen would be local to the site. In these circumstances the Framework indicates that the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.

Other matters

10. The proposal would provide additional accommodation for residents of No. 3. In my judgement, views from the windows in the proposed rear dormer of neighbouring habitable rooms, including the conservatory of No. 1, would be sufficiently limited so as not to have a significant detrimental effect on the privacy of the residents of those dwellings. Furthermore, the outlook from neighbouring habitable rooms towards No. 3 is already likely to be dominated by the 3-storey building. The proposal would not add significantly to that affect. Under the circumstances, I consider that the proposed development would not conflict with the Development Plan or SPD insofar as they seek to safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring residents.

Conclusions

11. In my judgement, the benefits of the appeal scheme do not outweigh the harm that I have identified. I conclude on balance, that the appeal scheme would not amount to sustainable development under the terms of the Framework and it would conflict with the Development Plan taken as a whole. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

I Jenkins

INSPECTOR