
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2017

by Colin Cresswell BSc (Hons) MA MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/17/3177310
59 Heybridge Avenue, London SW16 3DY

- 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 Mrs Anabella McNeill against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 17/00116/FUL, dated 28 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is rear dormer loft conversion to form 2 new bedrooms.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for rear dormer loft conversion to form 2 new bedrooms at 59 Heybridge Avenue, London SW16 3DY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/00116/FUL, dated 28 December 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: A-001, A-002, A-003, A-005, A-006, A-007.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Streatham Lodge Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is an older style semi-detached dwelling situated within the Streatham Lodge Conservation Area, the significance of which is derived from the architectural quality of the buildings and streets. One element contributing to the character of Heybridge Avenue is the visual consistency of the street scene, with groupings of similarly designed dwellings on either side of the street. This includes the appeal property, which is part of a row of dwellings sharing the same architectural style. The rear elevation of the property also maintains a good degree of consistency with its neighbours on either side, which both have outriggers extending into the garden.

4. Although some of the properties in the vicinity of the appeal site have rooflights on their front elevation, they are not representative of the wider street scene. Nonetheless, the proposed rooflights on the front elevation of the appeal property would be relatively inconspicuous features due to their small size and minimal projection above the plane of the roof slope. As such, the rooflights would not undermine the consistency of the street scene to such an extent that they would harm the significance of the Conservation Area in this location.
5. I am aware that the Lambeth Building Alterations & Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2015 (the SPD) advises that roof lights should be resisted on front and other prominent roof slopes. However, the overarching purpose of the SPD is to promote appropriate standards of design and I do not consider that the proposed rooflights would conflict with that objective.
6. I agree with the Council that the smaller dormer proposed on the rear roof slope would be in keeping with the appeal property due to its modest size. Whilst the proposed dormer extension on the outrigger roof would be a larger structure, it would be set below the ridge height of the main roof and would be of a relatively simple form. Furthermore, it would not be prominent from many vantage points due to its positioning on the roof. As such, it would appear subordinate to the original roof form and would not undermine the visual consistency of this group of dwellings. I am mindful that paragraph 4.19 of the SPD advises that in order to maintain subordination, roof extensions that extend over rear returns or close returns will be generally resisted. However, for reasons outlined above, I do not consider that in this particular case the proposal would lead to harm.
7. I have based my decision on the particular circumstances of the appeal property and its immediate surroundings. Differing circumstances and the potential for cumulative harm would represent matters to be considered were other similar proposals to be advanced elsewhere within the Conservation Area in the future.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There would be no conflict with Policies Q5, Q8, Q11 and Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2015 which promote local distinctiveness and appropriate standards of design. The appeal should therefore be allowed.
9. In the interests of clarity, standard conditions requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the plans and within a time limit have been imposed. To protect the character and appearance of the area, a condition has also been imposed requiring matching materials.

Colin Cresswell

INSPECTOR