
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2017

by Geoff Underwood BA(Hons) PGDip(Urb Cons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 23 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/D/17/3179111

2 North Lodge, Ealing Green, Ealing W5 5QU

- 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 Aurelie Canales against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 171898HH, dated 14 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with hip to gable roof extension and dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant provided revised drawings to the Council during the course of its consideration of the planning application in an attempt to overcome the Council's concerns over the proposal and she has provided these in support of her appeal. However, the Council's Committee/Delegated Report notes that as that revised scheme would represent a material change it made its decision on the original proposal and lists those original drawings on its decision notice. There is no indication that interested parties were notified or consulted on those revised drawings.
3. The three dormer arrangement shown on the revised drawings is materially different to the scheme upon which interested parties were notified and the Council made its decision. In the interests of fairness it is important that what I consider is essentially what was considered by the Council¹ and I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the originally submitted drawings. To do otherwise could prejudice the interests of interested parties who may well be unaware of the proposed change.

Main Issue

4. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect the development would have on the character and appearance of the host building, its neighbour at 1 North Lodge, the area and the Ealing Green Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.

¹ Annexe M, Procedural Guide Planning appeals – England, 2016.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a modest, detached brick house with a hipped, almost pyramidal, roof. It has a relatively simple appearance which is embellished by the distinctive features of a two storey bay window, brick moulding around the front door with a circular window above and two tall brick chimney stacks flanking the roof. Its neighbour at No 1 shares many of these features, albeit that they are handed, and whilst set slightly forward of No 2 and not exactly identical, the two are similar enough to appear as a pair.
6. The properties occupy a prominent corner location and No 2's rear elevation and roof slope is clearly visible in the gap between No 1 and adjoining buildings on Webster Road which leads off Ealing Green.
7. As detailed in the Character Appraisal², the Conservation Area in which the appeal site lies covers a relatively wide and varied area but derives much of its significance from the historic and distinctive buildings and open spaces and the characteristic townscape which results from the inter-relationships between them. This includes Ealing Green itself where buildings of varied appearance create a largely harmonious appearance on either side of the green spaces which occupy both sides of the road.
8. Therefore, whilst the C20 character of Nos 1 and 2 is not typical of many of the buildings in the Conservation Area, their design, appearance, roof form and materials mean that they nevertheless make a positive contribution to the Area's character and appearance. Their appearance distinguishes the pair from nearby dwellings of broadly similar era outside the Conservation Area. The Management Plan³ identifies the roofscape as an important element of the character of the Area where special care and attention should be paid to any alterations and in particular seeks to avoid hip to gable roof extensions and dormer windows that dominate the roof slope.
9. The proposal would replace the hipped roof with a gabled one with much of the rear taken up by a large flat roofed dormer. Although retained, the chimney stacks would only protrude above the gables by a limited extent. The result would be that the pleasing proportions and roof shape of the existing dwelling would be harmfully altered. This effect would be heightened when considered next to the unaltered hipped roof of No 1 in which context it would appear particularly incongruous. Furthermore, the large, bulky dormer would be clearly apparent to the rear and its scale and proportions would not only harm the appearance of the host building but the positive composition formed by Nos 1 and 2 as well which would also harmfully alter the roofscape of the area and consequently that of the Conservation Area.
10. The site's immediate adjacency to the taller Glaston Court block would, as the appellant points out, limit views of the proposed alterations from the north. The backdrop of its sizeable gable would also slightly reduce the effect of the rear dormer against which it would be seen from Webster Gardens. Mature trees would also make the changes less apparent from views across the Green from the north. However, limited views of the changes from some vantage points would not greatly mitigate the harmful effects the development would cause.

² Ealing Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2008.

³ Ealing Green Conservation Area Management Plan, 2008.

11. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and, as a designated heritage asset, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to its conservation. In so doing I consider that the proposal would fail to preserve the Conservation Area's special character and appearance and would harm its significance.
12. However, given that the proposal would be limited in its scale compared to the considerable size of the Conservation Area this harm would be less than substantial, circumstances the Framework requires the public benefits of a proposal to be weighed against such harm. Whilst I can appreciate the appellant's desire to create more room within the house to enable her to remain there with her growing family, such benefits would be private and would not amount to public ones. Consequently the harm would not be outweighed by public benefits.
13. The proposal would not be in accordance with the advice in the Management Plan. The development would be contrary to local character, architecture and heritage asset requirements of London Plan, 2016 Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8, and would be contrary to the heritage asset care and conservation provisions of Core Strategy⁴ Policies 1.1 (h) and 1.2 (g). By not complementing the area's building pattern, scale and detailing, not complementing its context and not retaining or enhancing characteristic features and detailing in a Conservation Area, it would also be contrary to Development Management DPD⁵ Policies 7.4, 7B and 7C.
14. The appellant refers to South Lodge which she advises was of similar design to Nos 1 and 2 and to which she reports the Council raised no objections when it was demolished some years ago. However, I have not been provided with any details of that building nor the considerations which led to its demolition. In any event I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits and the contribution the appeal building makes to the area's character and appearance.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building, considered with its neighbour at 1 North Lodge, the area, and the Ealing Green Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the development plan, Council guidance and the Framework and the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Geoff Underwood

INSPECTOR

⁴ Development Strategy 2026 Development plan Document, 2012.

⁵ Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document, 2013.