



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2017

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/17/3179374

16 The Avenue, Wanstead, London E11 2EF

- 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 Janet Dooner against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 4739/16, dated 28 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension extending 5m back from the original house with a flat roof with 2 roof lanterns to provide a suitable sized kitchen and modernised dining / living area. A loft extension involving a remodelled and rationalised roof structure providing 2 additional bedrooms with en-suites and storage spaces. The construction of a small enclosed porch to the front of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area and the effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, in particular 14 The Avenue, by way of visual impact, outlook, light and privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property comprises a relatively large two storey semi-detached house. The front of the property contains a prominent front gable feature, set above the eaves level of the roof. The roof itself comprises of a hipped arrangement, which extends below the eaves level of the property, nearest the side elevation. Further back on the side elevation is an asymmetrical roof section, which allows accommodation to be formed at first floor level within its roof slopes. The rear roof slope, which is orientated over a substantial rear garden, contains a discretely sited hipped roof dormer. The rear elevation also contains a single storey element which modestly projects towards the rear garden.
4. This part of the Conservation Area consists of substantial residential properties which, as is set out in the description on the Conservation Area plan, are predominantly from the late Victorian or the Edwardian era. Although there is some variety in form, as a rule, they are pleasingly imposing properties which

exhibit, in particular, elements of arts and craft architecture. Single front gables are a noticeable feature, as are hipped roofs, and these add to the contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. Whilst a number of properties have been, or are in the process of being, altered, the prevailing character of the Conservation Area is largely intact.

5. The proposal would introduce a second gable feature on the front elevation of the property. This would be uncharacteristic in the area, with the arrangement of single front gables. As with the existing front gable, it would project well above the eaves level and would be prominent when viewed from the road. It would appear uncomfortable in appearance as an addition to the front elevation, in particular as there is a similar existing feature, and notably detract from the streetscene.
6. The proposed alterations to the side roof would alter the asymmetrical arrangement into one that would be gable ended. This would result in an increase in its height and size, so that it would appear out of scale compared to the current roof arrangement, despite that it would be set back from the front elevation and down from the main ridgeline. This detrimental effect would be increased by the resultant significant and bulky rear alterations to the roof plane, and with the addition of substantial sized dormers. The current roof arrangements, in particular the hipped roof elements, would be markedly diminished. The proposed rear extension, with its contrasting design and external appearance, would add to the overall incongruity of the proposal.
7. The adjoining semi-detached property at No 14, whilst sharing some attributes with the appeal property, is not identical in terms of its form or design. Whilst some variety is an aspect of the significance of this part of the Conservation Area, what is important in maintaining this significance is, where properties are altered, this is done in a manner which is in keeping. As I have set out, I consider this has not been achieved by the proposal.
8. The appellant has also drawn my attention to a number of planning approvals in the area. Whilst I accept that some of the associated alterations have resulted in a limited loss of the prevailing character, a number have also sought to sympathetically reflect the architectural qualities of the area. As the character is largely intact, it is proper for this to be maintained as it does appreciably contribute to the area.
9. The statutory duty in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Act) is of considerable weight and importance. Having regard to the above, I conclude the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This weighs significantly against the proposal.
10. Similarly, I also conclude the proposal would not comply with Policy SP3 of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2008) (CS); Policies E3, BD1 and BD5 of the Council's Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document (2008) (DPD); and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (as altered, 2016), in these regards, which collectively require development to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, and provide for a high quality design which is informed by the historic environment. I also find the proposal would not comply with paragraph 131 of the National Planning

Policy Framework as it would not make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Living Conditions

11. No 14 itself has a single storey extension which is sited adjacent to the boundary, and contains french doors near to the boundary. This extension projects beyond the single storey element on the rear of the appeal property. Beyond No 14's extension is its rear garden.
12. With this arrangement of the two properties at the rear, I consider the additional distance that the proposed rear extension would project beyond No 14's extension would not cause any undue effects on the living conditions of the occupiers of that property. The height of the extension would be modest as it would be a flat roofed structure, with the additional height of the roof lanterns sited well off the boundary. Although the french doors and the adjacent part of the garden would be close to the extension, its proportions would not result in unacceptable effects on visual impact and outlook. The rear of No 14 would still benefit from a largely open aspect with the orientation over its own garden, and the extension would not appear overbearing.
13. Similarly, with the proportions of the extension and the orientation between the two properties, there would not be a significant loss of light. The proposed dormers would be orientated over the appeal property's rear garden, and so any overlooking would not be unreasonable due to the angles involved. The other elements of the proposal would be sited so as not to have an undue effect in respect on living conditions. The proposal would be well sited off the boundaries with other neighbouring properties, and so it would also not unduly affect the living conditions of their occupiers.
14. I conclude that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, in particular No 14, by way of visual impact, outlook, light and privacy. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy SP3 of the CS and Policy BD1 of the DPD, in these regards, as it would respect the amenity of adjoining properties and not prejudice the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by unreasonably restricting sunlight, daylight or privacy to their properties.

Other Matters

15. The rear of No 14 is shown on listing records to contain a Grade II* listed garden temple. With the length of the rear garden, the proposal would be sited some distance from this structure. It would therefore preserve the setting of the listed building and accord with the statutory duty under Section 66 (1) of the Act.
16. Although I note remarks about discussions which took place between the appellant and the Council during the planning application, this is not a matter for me to comment on in the context of this appeal. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the proposal before me, including the amended plans that were submitted during the planning application.

Conclusion

17. The proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal would not be unacceptable with regard to living conditions and it would preserve the setting of the listed building, although these matters are neutral. I have considered all matters that have been raised, but none would outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area. For these reasons, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR