
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2017

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/17/3181901

4 Shannon Grove, London SW9 8BX

- 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 G Williams against the decision of the London Borough of Lambeth Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01427/FUL, dated 22 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension, alteration of rear dormer window of mansard roof (approved Ref 16/07014/FUL) and insertion of roof lights (Velux windows) on top mansard slopes front and rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the area; and the effect on the living conditions of the residents of 2 Shannon Grove with regard to outlook.

Reasons

3. The proposal would result in a large ground floor rear extension. This has already been approved as part of application reference 16/07014/FUL. A mansard roof was also permitted as part of that application. This proposal differs in that three roof lights are proposed to both the front and rear roof slopes. The two approved rear facing dormer windows would be replaced by a large single dormer. The structure of the mansard is already in place and includes roof lights. However, the works are not entirely as shown on the submitted plans and I have therefore considered the details submitted rather than the works on site.
 4. The third element of the proposal relates to a first floor rear extension that would extend along the shared boundary with 2 Shannon Grove. A first floor extension was previously considered and an appeal dismissed in 2014 (APP/N5660/D/13/2209666). The design of the extension differs from that previously considered but the scale would be similar. I have had regard to that decision. Although a new Local Plan has been adopted since that date, I have no evidence to suggest that general considerations with regard to design and amenity have significantly altered.
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Character and appearance

5. The property is a two storey mid-terrace with a front parapet and a traditional butterfly roof behind. Its character and appearance remains in keeping with other terraced properties in the area. The mansard roof introduces a new feature within the street scene. However, its simple and traditional proportions go a long way to ensuring that the parapet wall remains an important and prominent feature. The introduction of roof lights would detract from the simple and traditional appearance of the mansard roof. It is clear from the works already carried out that the roof lights would be visible from within the street. They would be particularly prominent in public views when illuminated from within. The proposed roof lights would detract from the simple form of the roof and would increase its prominence. This would detract from the character of the property and the wider terrace.
6. The roof lights to the rear would have less prominence but would similarly be at odds with the simple design characteristics of the approved mansard roof. The proposed substantial rear facing window, to replace the approved more modest dormer windows, would similarly detract further from the design of the mansard. These elements would dominate the rear roof slope. The rear of these terraced properties can be partially viewed from Tunstall Road but they are not at all prominent in public views. However, a lack of prominence is not a good reason for accepting poor design.
7. The rear first floor extension would fail to respect the historic roof lines of the property and would be of a less satisfactory form than the extension that was part of the application considered previously at appeal. It would screen the high level railings and privacy screen of the neighbouring property, but its form and scale would not be sympathetic to the original character of the building. I do not find the design of this element to be a positive feature. This adds to my concerns with regard to the mansard roof alterations proposed.
8. Policy Q5 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2015 requires that local distinctiveness be sustained and reinforced; and that development respond to the positive aspects of the local context and historic character. Where development deviates from locally distinct development patterns, it will be necessary to show that the proposal clearly delivers design excellence; and will make a positive contribution to its local and historic context. The proposal would be contrary to this policy as it would detract from the local context and historic character and would represent poor design. It would also conflict with the design requirements of policy Q8.
9. Policy Q11 seeks designs which positively respond to the original architecture, roof form, detailing and fenestration. It also generally seeks subordination with regard to extensions. It does not support development which would unacceptably dominate or overwhelm the host building. With regard to roof lights, it advises that they should generally be modest in size and be placed and aligned sensitively to respect the character of the host building. There would be clear conflict with these requirements.
10. With regard to the first floor extension, the appellant considers it to be a 'rear return' rather than a 'closet extension', in terms of the considerations within policy Q11. It would not satisfy the design objectives with regard to closet

extensions but as the form of the extension would not be characteristic of the original building, it would also fail to gain support from the design objectives relating to rear return extensions. Although there are a number of less sensitive historic additions to properties in the vicinity, these do not indicate that lower design standards should be adopted now.

11. The Council have produced a Supplementary Planning Document: Building Alterations & Extensions 2015. This accords with the detail within the above policies and goes into greater detail with regard to roof additions and extensions. I have found no support within it with regard to the changes in details currently proposed. Whilst the document accepts larger rear dormers in some circumstances, it does not appear to anticipate a structure of the scale currently proposed to the rear of new mansard roofs. The Council's policies are generally consistent with the design objectives of the *National Planning Policy Framework* and I therefore afford them considerable weight.
12. Reference has been made to other works within the area and more recent planning consents. I have not found any to replicate the works currently proposed and I found for the most part, that rear extensions maintain the general character of the host building with regard to roof slopes. I have not found there to be examples that suggest that the additional design elements before me should be considered acceptable within this particular context.

Amenity

13. The first floor extension would enclose the first floor roof terrace to the rear of 2 Shannon Grove. This relationship is unusual as that property has a large first floor bedroom window facing the shared boundary. A screen between the properties is already in place but the new wall, on the party boundary, would be higher and deeper. A similar relationship was considered by the previous Inspector. As the bedroom also has a window to the rear, the impact on light was considered to be acceptable as was the impact on the stair window. However, the impact on outlook was considered to be unacceptable. I have found nothing to suggest that an alternative conclusion should be reached in relation to the scale and proximity of the development proposed.
14. The appellant has made reference to other two storey rear additions. However, I am not satisfied that this particular relationship, with a neighbouring terrace and side facing habitable room window, exists elsewhere. The first floor addition would detract from the living conditions of the residents of 2 Shannon Grove with regard to outlook and would be contrary to policy Q2(iii) which seeks to maintain adequate outlook by avoiding any undue sense of enclosure.

Conclusions

15. The scale and prominence of the high level roof lights would detract from the simple character of the mansard roof. The scale of the rear dormer would dominate the roof addition and detract from its simple proportions and subservient character. The first floor addition would be of a substantial scale that would not reflect the design detailing of the original property and it would result in a loss of outlook for the neighbouring residents which would be harmful to their living conditions.

16. Whilst the works would provide additional accommodation and result in a more efficient use of this property, some of these benefits would be achieved by a more satisfactory design approach. Overall, the proposal would result in poor design in this particular context and would conflict with the development plan policies. Although I note the lack of objection from neighbouring residents, I have not found there to be any matters that are sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR