



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 February 2019

by Euan FS Pearson BA(Hons) BTP FRGS MRICS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/D/18/3219203
30 Woodsford Square, London W14 8DP

- 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 Katrina Sear against the decision of The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
 - The application Ref PP/18/04751, dated 1 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 9 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is addition of external security shutters to rear elevation on ground and first floor levels.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the Holland Park Conservation Area (HPCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a modern four storey mid-terrace townhouse which was part of a 1960s residential development. The property backs onto Abbotsford House, a flatted complex. The rear of the terrace, in particular, and the appeal property are visible from balconies and upper floor windows of the flats, as well as parts of the outside communal areas. At my site visit I saw that there were clear views of the rear of the appeal property and terrace, from the public areas around the entrance to Abbotsford House. This area is elevated and views are not obscured by planting or boundary walls.
4. The appeal site is also located within the HPCA and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) at paragraph 193 which states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation irrespective of the degree of harm.

5. I observed, from my site inspection, that the rear of the appeal property has been extended at ground and first floor levels. The design includes large metal framed windows/doors, providing views over the enclosed rear garden.
6. The appeal proposal is for the addition of three aluminium roller shutters which would have externally mounted head boxes which would project from the walls of the premises.
7. The proposed shutters (either individually or cumulatively) when in their lowered position would significantly alter the appearance of the appeal property. The decorative windows/doors, activity and lighting behind it, would all be hidden and replaced by a blank façade. To my mind this would harm the appearance of the appeal property by altering its fenestration and giving the lower floors a commercial character. I have also considered whether the shutters could be coloured to match the external appearance of the building. However, I consider that this would make little difference in terms of the harm which the development would cause.
8. In coming to the above views, I acknowledge that there are a variety of extensions on the rear of the terrace. However, I saw no evidence of external shutters or head boxes and these are not a feature to the frontage of the Square either.
9. Furthermore, the Holland Park Conservation Area Appraisal (2017) recognises that the HPCA generally, as with Woodford Square, is characterised by the use of traditional building materials including brick, glass, painted wood and painted cast iron in features such as railings. Aluminium polyester coated slatted roller shutters would be out of keeping and would have a negative impact on appearance of HPCA.
10. The appellant has outlined that the shutters will only be used when the appellant is away from the site and that they are necessary for security reasons. I saw that the garden has brick boundary walls, the wall at the foot of the garden exceeds 2m in height. These clearly define what is private space and are an obstacle to entry. There is overlooking of the garden from neighbouring properties, providing natural surveillance. I do not consider that the garden is secluded nor have I been presented with any evidence that property crime is a serious problem in this location. There are various other preventative measures as set out in the Council's supplementary planning document Designing Out Crime. Therefore, I give little weight to the suggestion that the harm I have identified is negated by security concerns.
11. Paragraph 196 of the Framework states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (such as the HPCA), this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The appellant has not advanced a case that the development would provide any public benefits, nor have I been able to identify any significant public benefit. Taking this into account, any public benefits which do exist do not outweigh the harm I have identified to the HPCA.

12. For the above reasons the development would harm the character and appearance of the area, and the HPCA and would conflict with Policies CL1, CL2, CL3, CL6 and CL11 of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Consolidated Local Plan (2014) which amongst other matters seek to ensure that proposals conserve the significance, views and setting of the Borough's heritage assets including conservation areas, has regard and responds to its context, together with securing good design which responds to the local character. It would also conflict with the heritage aims of the Framework.

Conclusion

13. Taking all matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

Euan FS Pearson

INSPECTOR