



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 August 2019

By Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/19/3230244

2 Openview, London SW18 3PF

- 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 Miss Stacey Cunningham against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2019/1018, dated 6 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is for a rear dormer roof extension to facilitate loft conversion and 3 No. conservation style roof windows to the front of the roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the host building, the terrace and the Magdalen Park Conservation Area (MPCA).

Reasons

3. The MPCA is characterised by clusters of uniformly designed cottage-style dwellings which were constructed after 1920 and whose designs were influenced by the Garden City Movement. The dwellings are set back from the streets behind landscaped front gardens that are enclosed by low boundary hedges. This together with the spacious streets, which include an abundance of grass verges, small greens and trees contributes to the spacious, orderly and verdant character and appearance of the MPCA.
4. Consistent with this, Openview is characterised by uniformly designed two storey terraced houses with uncluttered front and rear building lines and a continuous roof line with hipped ends and punctuated with chimneys. Each terrace has two story projecting gable or hipped projections on the front elevations positioned close to the outer ends of the terraces. These add to the symmetry of the terraces.
5. The Magdalen Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS), sets out various measures to enhance the conservation area. With regard to extensions it advises that individual dwellings should be viewed as

- part of the whole group and that extensions should respect the symmetry and uniformity of the whole terrace.
6. The Appeal dwelling is located towards the end of the southernmost terrace in Openview. To the rear of this terrace are a number of single storey rear extensions, although no dormer extensions. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of dormer extensions within the adjacent terraces, as well as within the surrounding area. Typically, they comprise mansard style roof extensions or simple and uncluttered flat roofed extensions. The latter includes wide extensions that start above the eaves line, project up to the ridge line and cover most of the rear roof-slope. Generally, this simple approach respects the uncluttered lines of the dwellings, although those I saw that were clad with fibre cement slates appear visually stark and bulky. This is due to their thickness and uniform dark colour. They are visually prominent and contrast with the existing lightweight, multi-toned natural slates. As such rather than set a precedent, they serve to illustrate the harm that can result from some dormer extensions.
 7. There are also a significant number of roof-lights on the front roof-slopes of dwellings in the locality. Of these the conservation style roof lights have been most successful in being assimilated into the roof-scape and the street scene.
 8. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when assessing proposals for new development within a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to its conservation. Any harm requires clear and convincing justification, whilst opportunities for new development in conservation areas should be sought. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Policy DMS2 of the Wandsworth Local Plan - Development Management Policies 2016 (DMP), reflects and is consistent with these requirements.
 9. Together, policies DMS1 and DMH5 of the DMP seek to ensure that new development contributes positively to the spatial character and that extensions are well designed. Rear extensions should be subservient to the original building and not over dominant. The London Borough of Wandsworth Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (SPD) advises that where dormer windows are proposed any new windows should relate to the architecture of the original building and external materials should match those of the host building. It notes that the use of artificial slates has detracted from the overall appearance of many historic buildings. In addition, where they would be visible from the street the external appearance of extensions will be particularly important.
 10. The proposed rear dormer would occupy most of the rear roof slope and would sit a short distance above the eaves line and would project to just below the ridge line. It would reflect the proportions and design of other dormer extensions in the locality and in this respect, it would blend in with the rear garden environment. However, the proposed dormer extension would be clad with fibre cement slates which would be visually stark against the slim,

lightweight multi-toned slates on the roof-slope of the host terrace. In addition, the proposed windows are out of alignment and fail to respect the proportions of the existing windows and in particular would be deeper. As a consequence, the rear elevation of the resultant dwelling would appear cluttered and unbalanced and the proposed dormer would be visually stark. It would materially detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the terrace within the rear garden environment.

11. Despite the separation distance between them, the proposed dormer would be clearly visible from Dawnay Road, across the rear gardens of the adjacent dwellings. Due to its fibre cement walls and fenestration the proposed dormer extension would be unduly prominent and would materially detract from the roof-scape of the terrace. This materially adds to the harm that would be caused to the host terrace and the rear garden environment.
12. Whilst the level of harm that these elements of the scheme would cause to the significance of the MPCA would be limited, they nonetheless need to be weighed against the public benefits resulting from the scheme and great weight should be given to the conservation of the MPCA. During its construction, the proposed dormer extension would provide employment and would contribute to the local economy. In addition, the proposal would make full and effective use of the existing building. However, both individually and together these public benefits would clearly fail to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the significance of the MPCA. Further, the harm to the character, appearance and significance of the MPCA that would be caused by the proposed development would outweigh the personal benefits for the appellant and their family that would result from the additional living accommodation.
13. It would be possible to deal with the external cladding concerns by condition. However, to address the concerns relating to the alignment, size and appearance of the windows would require design amendments. As such it is not something that could be dealt with by condition.
14. I conclude on the main issue that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the terrace and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the MPCA. Whilst the level of harm to the significance of the MPCA would be limited, this harm would not be outweighed by any public benefits. The scheme would therefore conflict with policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the DMP, the SPD, the CAMS and section 15 of the Framework.

Other matter

15. Whilst the concerns expressed regarding the handling of the appeal application by the Council are noted, such matters do not affect the consideration of the planning merits of the appeal proposal, as other mechanisms exist to resolve such issues.

Conclusion

16. Having regard to the conclusion on the main issue and all other matters, the appeal is dismissed.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR

