



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 August 2019

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/D/19/3230581

4 Argyle Road, London E1 4EQ

- 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 Silke Steidinger against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - The application Ref PA/19/00374, dated 15 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension to provide additional bedroom and shower room to existing dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Carlton Square Conservation Area, and
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residents in terms of noise and disturbance and privacy.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a mid-terrace two storey brick house situated between Carlton Square and Alderney Road within a residential area of traditional terraces and more modern flatted development with squares of open space framed by terraces of houses. Front gardens separate the main entrance of the appeal dwelling from the road, with back to back gardens to houses on Tollet Street. The appeal site is located within the Carlton Square Conservation Area (CA), characterised for its mid to late Victorian terraced houses some with parapet roofs concealing uniform roofs behind.
4. The proposal would create a full width, flat roofed extension sat between two existing chimney stacks. Albeit the ceiling height of the first floor spaces has been reduced the proposal would sit higher than the parapet wall and project almost to the end of the rear facade of the property, with a mansard roof and roof lights within the rear vertical elevation. A small external terrace would be located behind the parapet wall providing a set-back between the extension and the parapet wall. The main roof at the appeal site is described as a

“butterfly” roof with two distinct roofs set behind the parapet wall running east to west with a valley created between the two roofs. This is consistent with the other houses along the terrace. The roofs are an acknowledged feature of the CA and make a positive contribution to the overall significance of the CA.

5. From my site inspection, standing back from the front of the terrace, it is only part of the chimney stacks that are visible due to the parapet wall, and due to the closeness of the houses on the opposite terrace, this restricts the opportunity to view the terrace from a longer distance at this point. Furthermore, when looking at the front of the terrace where it meets Alderney Road, the main roof appears as a flat roof due to the parapet wall that wraps around the gable end. This relationship is mirrored when looking towards the front of the terrace where it meets Carlton Square and the public Carlton Gardens as the roofscape is largely invisible in short and longer distinct views due to the parapet wall and the existing landscaping that obscures the terrace from view. At these particular vantage points, I do not consider the roof extension would be clearly visible.
6. However, whilst there is limited opportunity to view the roofscape from these vantages, there is opportunity to view the rear roofscape of this terrace more clearly from elsewhere in the area. Above the garage infill between 1 Argyle Road and 50 Tollet Street provides clear sight towards the back of the appeal property and its terrace. Also, the rear of the appeal site is visible from the road when looking between 25/26 Carlton Square and 43 Tollet Street. These roads form part of the CA and the gaps afford pleasing views across the rear elevations of the terrace and the complete and unaltered roofscape.
7. The proposal would disrupt the roofscape and would also be visible to a large number of homes as well as from the street. Consequently, the style and character of the resultant dwelling would be at serious odds with the surrounding properties.
8. Turning to the scale of development proposed, the extension would sit between the valley of the roofs and extend close to the rear facade of the dwelling. Given its scale and massing, it would appear as a large and bulky addition to the roof scape, resulting in the loss of the junction that forms an integral part of the original roofscape of the terrace and would no longer read as a butterfly roof. This strong roof pattern is a distinctive feature that makes up the character of the CA. The roof extension would be clearly visible at the points identified, but regardless of its visibility, I am of the view that the extension together with its small fenestration detail at the rear, that jars with the much larger traditional sliding sash windows of the host property, would erode the character of the host building, the terrace as a whole and does not make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness in accordance with paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to the recently constructed mansard roof extension at 29 Alderney Road and I could see that a number of front roof slopes contain mansard roofs along this terrace. I have not been provided with the full details of the circumstances that led to these developments. However, this terrace and the appeal terrace are not directly comparable due to factors such as differing roof styles.
10. Whilst an Inspector may have commented that a roof extension to an out-rigger proposed to 29 Alderley Road was not clearly visible from the Carlton

Square CA, as I have identified before, the appeal development would be visible between houses. In any case, this is a different proposal to that at 29 Alderley Road.

11. The appellant also points to examples of mansard roof extensions in other neighbouring boroughs. Although these may be deemed to be acceptable, I have nevertheless considered the appeal site on its own individual merits.
12. Given the circumstances explained above, I do not consider the development would preserve or enhance the special architectural features that contribute to the significance of the conservation area. This is in direct conflict with the Council's policy DM24 of the Managing Development Document 2013 that amongst other criteria requires development to be sensitively designed, enhance local character and take into account rooflines. The proposal also conflicts with the London Plan 2015 policies 7.4, 7.6, 7.8 seeking development to respond positively to local character and to sustain and enhance the historic significance of heritage assets which is also reflected in policy DM27 of the Managing Development Document 2013, and SP10 of the Tower Hamlets Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010. In respect of paragraph 196 of the Framework, I am of the view that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA with no public benefits to outweigh the harm I have identified.

Living Conditions

13. Turning to the issue of the proposed roof terrace, the Council consider this to give rise to privacy issues and noise and disturbance to local residents. The roof terrace would be positioned between the extension and parapet to the front of the dwelling. Although outdoor space for the occupants would be created, with skylights and a glazed door onto the terrace, I do not consider that there would be a significant opportunity to overlook neighbours or that a detrimental loss of privacy would occur. Furthermore, I do not consider that the roof terrace of this size, would encourage an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance.
14. I consider that the proposal would therefore accord with policies DM24 and DM25 of the Council's Managing Development Document 2013 that advocates good design standards in new development and the protection of amenity standards for existing and future residents, which is also mirrored by policy 7.6 of the London Plan, and policy SP10 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010 that seeks to protect and enhance heritage assets.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR