



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 October 2019 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

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

Decision date: 01 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/19/3234310

4 Coppice Drive, London, SW15 5BW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Ms E Hasse-Grierson against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2019/1901, dated 23 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 June 2019.
 - The application sought planning permission for 'alterations including erection of part single, part two-storey front, side and rear extensions; erection of replacement roof including raising the ridge by 1.0m; erection of dormer windows to front, side and rear roof slopes; use of garage as habitable accommodation and installation of a replacement window, raising of chimney stacks' without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 2018/4049, dated 16 October 2018.
 - The condition in dispute is No. 2 which states that: The development shall be carried out in accordance with the reports, specifications and drawings detailed: 784 A3 310 G; 311G; 312K; 313L; 313L1; 320H; 322J; 323J; 330D; 331E; 321J.
 - The reason given for the condition is: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development, and to allow the local planning authority to review any potential changes to the scheme.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. Planning permission was granted in October 2018 for various alterations to No. 4 Coppice Drive, including a first-floor extension over the existing, attached garage. A condition was imposed on the original permission specifying that the development shall be carried out in accordance with approved plans. This appeal seeks to vary that condition to specify alternative plan numbers, for an amended design to extend the width of the first-floor side extension by 1 metre from that previously approved.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the amendment would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Westmead Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a large two storey detached dwelling located on the south side of Coppice Drive. It is located within the Westmead Conservation Area (the 'CA'). The Westmead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2010 (the 'WCAA') states that the special character of the CA is derived from the high quality of the three distinct phases of suburban development. The appeal site is located in the southern part of the Willett Estate character area where houses are larger than those in the northern part and their status is reinforced by the generous space that surrounds them. The WCAA goes on to note the generous spaces between each of the individual houses and the gaps which allow views from the street into the often verdant gardens and sky beyond. The appeal dwelling reflects this character due to the spacing between it and the side boundary of the plot and thereby makes an important contribution to the significance of the CA as a heritage asset.
6. The appeal proposal seeks to increase the width of the first-floor side extension of the original permission by an additional 1m. This would also cause the eaves and roof line to extend further west towards No.5 Coppice Drive. It is noted the extant permission already reduces the gap between the appeal dwelling and No.5. However, the amended design, due to the increased massing, would see the spacing decrease further still. Furthermore, this would be at first floor level and thus would be readily apparent in the street scene. As such, it would significantly limit views through to the space beyond, thus reducing the spacious character of the area.
7. It is noted No.5 has a two-storey side extension, positioned on the shared boundary with the appeal site. This has significantly reduced the side spacing on that site. However, whilst I do not have the full details which led to the approval of that extension, I note there would have been a gap at first floor level between the original appeal dwelling and No.5. As such, the open character of the CA would have been preserved. However, the appeal proposal would in-fill an already reduced gap and thus appear at odds with the wider character of the area.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to various examples of development in the CA where extensions have been built close to the side boundary of the host property and thereby narrowed the gap between buildings. Whilst I have noted these examples, it seems to me that they do not reflect the prevailing character of the area, as identified in the WCAA. Moreover, I do not have the details of the context in which these extensions were permitted and cannot therefore be sure that they are directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
9. I acknowledge that the extension would be constructed in matching materials and would not dominate the host building. I also note that the amended design would remove the stepped side elevation between the ground and first floor of the appeal dwelling approved in the original application, which the appellant considers a benefit of the scheme. However, whilst the stepped design would not replicate that of the original dwelling, the approved extension would be subservient to the dwelling and would allow the original form of the building to remain legible. In that respect I have no reason to consider the approved

extension was poorly designed. Consequently, any benefit from the amended design in terms of the character and appearance of the host dwelling is limited.

10. The appellant notes that this proposal would improve the internal layout of the property to suit modern day family living. However, there is nothing before me to demonstrate that the approved layout is unacceptable in itself. Accordingly, this private benefit of the proposal carries limited weight in support of the appeal.
11. In terms of the approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area's significance as a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 196 states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use. The public benefit of the proposal is limited. On the opposite side of the balance, the Framework is clear that great weight should be attached to the heritage asset's conservation. As such public benefits do not outweigh the harm I have identified.
12. Furthermore, the proposed substitution of plans listed under condition No. 2 of permission ref 2018/4049, to increase the width of the first-floor side extension, would neither preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Westmead Conservation Area. As such, the amendment proposed would conflict with policy DMS2 of the Wandsworth Local Plan, Development Management Policies Document 2016, which, amongst other things, seeks to conserve and enhance the space in between and around buildings as well as front, side and rear gardens.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Susan Ashworth

INSPECTOR