



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2019

by R E Jones BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th November 2019.

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/19/3229759

105 Dover House Road, London SW15 5AD

- 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 A. Jadhav against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2019/0329, dated 24 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is for a proposed loft conversion/extension with side/rear facing dormer windows and front/side/rear facing conservation type roof windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether or not the proposed dormer windows would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Dover House Estate Conservation Area (DHECA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached dwelling located in the DHECA. I have therefore attached considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area (CA) in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. I have also had regard to Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in that where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development.
4. No 105 is half of a symmetrical pair of semi-detached dwellings with a hipped roof. A large chimney straddles the ridge line between the two adjoining dwellings. In the wider context, the DHECA's special character is derived from carefully planned clusters of picturesque cottage-style homes. Dwellings have a variety of roofscape features that are evident along the street. These differences are understated and characterised by subtle breaks in ridges and eaves. I consider these qualities to be a positive feature of the DHECA. In respect of the pair of semi-detached dwellings the appeal dwelling relates to, the eaves line at the front and rear of the property is higher than that at the side. The side facing roofslopes are therefore larger and deeper than those

facing the street and rear gardens. This difference is clearly seen in the street given that the appeal dwelling is sited forward of the building line of the terrace of dwellings to the south.

5. The side dormer would be a tall, narrow structure whose roof would meet the front and rear roof slopes. It would occupy an excessive proportion of the depth of the hipped roof resulting in it appearing dominant. The position of the window at the top of the dormer would reinforce its alien appearance. When viewed from the street, the height of the dormer combined with the excessive projection of its flat roof would seriously disrupt the symmetry of the existing roof of this pair of semis. Furthermore, its outward facing elevation and lower edge would project beyond and below the eaves line at the front of the house. This would appear jarring in context, resulting in an incongruous form of development that would significantly harm the appearance of the dwelling.
6. The Wandsworth Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document – Housing (2016) (the SPD), provides guidance on the design of side dormers. It advises that 'a small, traditionally detailed dormer can be located on the hipped end of a semi-detached house without harming the appearance of the pair'. However, the side dormer in this case is substantial in terms of its height and outward extension from the roof plane and therefore fails to comply with the advice.
7. The proposed rear dormer would be positioned off-centre on the rear roof plane, which has a smaller surface area than the side plane. It would be set down from the roof line and above the eaves, whilst being set in from the side of the roof. However, the flat roof portion and right-hand cheek of the rear dormer would be constructed tight to the side roof ridge and junction with the neighbouring semi-detached dwelling. Not only would this unbalance the dwelling, the dormer's proportions would also appear bulky and disproportionate to the scale of the rear roof plane. In addition, the asymmetrical position of the window within the dormer adds to its awkward appearance. Both dormers are unacceptable individually and when considered together the harm to the original roof is even more significant.
8. It is acknowledged that the proposed rear dormer would not be clearly seen from the street and publicly visible areas of the Conservation Area as it would be screened by the proposed side dormer. Nonetheless it would be seen from neighbouring properties and their gardens to the side and nearby, breaching the harmonious unbroken rhythm of neighbouring roof planes when viewed from the rear. From the street, the front and side elevation of the proposed side dormer would be clearly visible. Therefore, its dominating proportions and excessive projection from the roof plane would draw the eye and be significantly at odds when seen in context with the carefully considered roofscape of the street scene. Therefore, the combined effect of the proposed side and rear dormers would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, neither preserving or enhancing it.
9. In support of the appeal, my attention has been drawn to other properties on the street that have already been extended in a similar manner to that now proposed, in addition to previous appeals and planning approvals. However, I do not know the full circumstances of those cases or the policies that applied at the time of their consideration. In any event, those that I saw, including the side dormer windows at Nos 1, 2 and 29 were smaller in scale, more proportionate with the main roof and positioned on shallower roof slopes which

differed to the appeal proposal. Accordingly, these did not represent a justified comparison with the appeal proposal.

10. The harm I have identified in relation to the proposed side and rear dormers is less than substantial in terms of the Framework. Accordingly, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, the proposed development would not add to the supply of housing in the area and although it may make a small contribution to the local economy in terms of the construction process, there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm. I note the contention that the proposed development would provide more accommodation to enlarge the family home and represent an efficient use of land. However, these are private benefits and therefore not matters that can be weighed against the harm to the DHECA.
11. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed dormer windows would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the DHECA. The scheme conflicts with Policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (2016), Policy IS3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Core Strategy (2016), the SPD and the Dover House Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy. These policies, amongst other considerations, require development to be sympathetic to the style of the building and protect the borough's heritage assets. The proposal would also be contrary to the Framework which requires heritage assets to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Other Matter

12. The Council's submission includes the listing details of the grade II listed Putney Park House, a large residence set within sizeable grounds and surrounded along its boundary by mature trees. However, given the scale of the proposed development, the existing tall trees on the boundary of the appeal property, and the separation distance from the listed building, I do not consider that its setting would be harmed.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to the other matter raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. E. Jones

INSPECTOR