



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3238650

64 Grosvenor Road, Wanstead, London E11 2ES

- 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 Keith Ball against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 5058/18, dated 3 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is to demolish the rear conservatory. Erection of single storey rear extension. Roof alterations including a rear dormer, a side dormer and two roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the roof alterations including a rear dormer, a side dormer and two roof lights. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the demolition of the rear conservatory and the erection of a single storey rear extension and planning permission is granted to demolish the rear conservatory and for the erection of a single storey rear extension at 64 Grosvenor Road, Wanstead, London E11 2ES in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 5058/18, dated 3 December 2018, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans in so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted: Site Plan Drawing Number 190 Rev A; Block Plan Drawing Number 195; Existing Plans Drawing Number EI-00-DR-100 Rev C; Proposed Plans Drawing Number 101 Rev C; Roof Level Plan – Existing and Proposed Drawing Number 102 Rev C; Existing and Proposed Roof Drawing Number 105 Rev C; Existing Elevations Drawing Number 120 Rev C; Proposed Elevations Drawing Number 121 Rev C; Existing and Proposed Section Drawing Number 130; and 3D Axonometric Drawing Number 140 Rev B.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. I note the very detailed description of the development given on the application and appeal form. The more succinct description used in the banner heading above and the formal decision is based on that used on the decision notice. However, I have amended the wording as it is clear from the plans the loft already provides living accommodation and two roof lights would be created not one.
3. The appellant has raised concerns with the Council's handling of the case, in particular the length of time it took to determine the application and the misleading and conflicting advice given to him. I note that this was subject to a formal complaint which the Council upheld. Irrespective of this, in determining the appeal I have only had regard to the planning merits of the case.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - Whether or not the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Wanstead Grove Conservation Area and the host property; and
 - the effect of the proposed rear extension on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 66 Grosvenor Road, with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property is a substantial semi-detached dwelling with fine architectural detailing. The conservation area in which it is located consists predominantly of late Victorian and Edwardian properties and its significance lies, in part, in that it displays good examples of varied types of such housing. At present the house has a single storey rear extension that extends across most of the rear elevation. Beyond this, on the side closest to the boundary with the attached dwelling (No 66), is a conservatory that is approximately half the width of the house.
6. It is proposed to demolish the existing conservatory and extend the existing single storey rear element of the house. This extension would not be as deep as the conservatory but would be wider. Whilst the extension proposed is relatively modest in size, in combination with the existing single storey element, it would make a substantial addition to the house.
7. Nevertheless, given the mass and bulk of the original house, the entire single storey element would not appear as a disproportionate or unsympathetic addition to the property. My conclusion in this regard is supported by the fact that a number of other houses in the immediate vicinity have similar full width single storey extensions that do not harm the character and appearance of their host dwellings or the area.
8. In addition, two dormers are proposed, one on the rear roof plane and the other at the side. These would have a dual pitch roof and would be set in from the sides, up from the eaves and down from the ridge.

9. The appellant has stated that the rear dormer would occupy about 40% of the rear roof plane. Be that as it may, it would be a substantial width. Its size means that the angle of the dormer roof would not reflect that of the main roof of the dwelling, making it have an uncomfortable relationship to the roof. Furthermore, the dormer would have a full height and width window and a Juliette balcony. As such, the fenestration would not align with, or reflect, the existing first floor windows of the property. Given this I consider that the rear dormer would be an unsympathetic addition to the property.
10. The size of the side dormer would ensure it would not dominate this roof plane and its roof would respect the angle of the existing roof. Nevertheless, I agree with the Council that its window would have an awkward relationship with the existing vertical first floor window on the side elevation.
11. At present there are two rooflights in the front roof plane. It is proposed to replace these with a single rooflight, and a small roof light would also be added to the rear roof. Unlike the fenestration on the front elevation of the house, which has a strong vertical emphasis, this would be horizontal in nature. As such, it would be an uncharacteristic addition to the dwelling. Whilst a number of other dwellings in the area have front roof lights, I observed that these were long narrow windows that respect the vertical emphasis of the fenestration on the houses.
12. Bringing these points together, I consider that the rear extension would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and the host property. However, I consider that the dormers and the roof lights would not preserve, and would unacceptably harm, the character and appearance of Wanstead Grove Conservation Area and the host property. Accordingly, this element of the proposed development would conflict with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the *Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (adopted March 2018)* (RLP) which seek to ensure that developments preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas and complement the character of the building and the area. Having regard to paragraph 196 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*, whilst the harm would be less than substantial, there are no public benefits that outweigh it.
13. In support of the appeal my attention was drawn to the fact that there are other large dormer extensions in the immediate area and I observed this to be the case. I do not know the circumstances of these cases or the policies that applied at the time of their consideration, although the Council has stated that a number of them were erected before the area was designated as a conservation area. In any event, those I saw confirmed that inappropriate dormers are detrimental to the character and appearance of the host property and the conservation area and so do not set a precedent that should be followed. Thus, they do not justify allowing a poorly designed scheme on this dwelling.

Living Conditions

14. No 66 has a single storey flat roof extension adjacent to the common boundary with the host property which has large patio doors and windows above. This projects a similar distance to the existing single storey extension at No 64. Beyond this, closer to the boundary with no 68, the neighbouring property has a mono pitch single storey extension, that projects beyond the other extension – being approximately the same depth as the conservatory on No 64.

15. The proposed rear extension would be close to the common boundary with No 66. Although it would not project as far as the current conservatory it would be more solid in nature. The extension would be higher than the boundary fence and would be clearly visible from the patio doors of the adjacent property. However, given the size of these doors and windows, I am satisfied that the extension would not adversely affect the amount of light in the room they serve.
16. Moreover, although more solid in nature, given the limited depth of the extension, particularly in comparison to the existing conservatory, I am satisfied that the proposal would not dominate the outlook from this window, or result in any significant increased sense of enclosure.
17. Consequently, I consider that the proposed rear extension would not unacceptably harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 66 Grosvenor Road with particular regard to outlook and light. Therefore, in this respect, there would be no conflict with Policies LP26 and LP30 of the RLP which require that developments do not have an adverse impact on the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Conclusion and Conditions

18. Overall, although I have found that the proposed dormers and roof lights would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and the host property, the rear extension would be acceptable in this regard. Moreover, the proposed rear extension would not harm the living conditions of the adjacent occupiers. This element of the proposal is clearly severable from the alterations proposed to the roof, so I consider this element can be allowed on its own.
19. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be allowed in respect of the rear extension but dismissed in respect of the roof alterations.
20. In addition to the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans, as this provides certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to control the external appearance of the extension.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR