



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2020

by Mr D.R McCreery MA BA (Hons) MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/19/3238728
145 Stevenage Road, London SW6 6PB

- 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 Zefi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2019/02187/FUL, dated 17 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is a first floor rear extension and party wall raise.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The evidence before me refers to existing enforcement matters at the appeal property, including a current enforcement appeal. In reaching a conclusion on this appeal I have focused on the merits of the appeal proposal. Enforcement matters have not formed part of this consideration.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Fulham Reach Conservation Area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property sits at the end of a short terrace of houses that are of modern construction, but traditional appearance. The general character of the area is residential in nature. To the front of the appeal property there is a mix of modern and traditional properties. To the rear there is an open courtyard that provides parking and access for several of the properties nearby.

5. Most of the properties to the rear, including the appeal property, appear to have been constructed around the same period and share a number of design features – including brickwork construction and windows of traditional proportions and appearance. This gives the immediate area a strong variation to the rhythm of built forms. As a result, buildings vary in height, generally between 2 and 3 storeys, and stepping of front and rear elevations is a common feature.
6. The proposed development would introduce an extension at first floor level, on top of the existing back addition. The result would be an extension at first floor level running the full width of the building. The detailed design would be consistent with the existing house. It is also proposed to raise the parapet wall at roof level between the appeal property and the neighbouring 143 Stevenage Road.
7. The appeal property has been extended previously, with a single storey rear extension and a roof addition. As a result, only a modest garden area now remains. The proposed development would further extend a very small site. The result would give the property additional prominence in the street scene where the extensions in combination would appear as bulky and unsympathetic additions. This impact would be heightened as the appeal property sits on a prominent corner plot that allows views from both Stevenage Road to the front and Rowberry Close to the side and rear. The impact of the proposed development is compounded by the proposed increase in the height of the parapet wall at roof level. This element would draw additional prominence to the property and appear as an incongruous and out of scale addition.
8. It is noted that neighbouring properties already have first floor projections and that the proposed development would be of a similar form and would not project any further rearward. However, stepping of front and rear elevations and building heights is a common feature of the street scene and contributes to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development would disrupt this strong feature of the street scene and harm the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area as a result.
9. It is noted that the evidence before me makes a number of references to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and policy aimed generally at achieving good standards of design. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed development would not achieve the standard of design expected by the Framework.
10. Evidence also draws my attention to a number of built forms in the area in the that exhibit features that are similar to the proposed development. This includes a development at 147 Stevenage Road that appears to have been built more recently. I have given the presence of these built forms limited weight. As variation in built form is a strong feature of the character of the area it is inevitable that some examples of development that is similar to the proposed development will be found. In reaching a conclusion on this appeal I have focused on the merits of the proposed development and the effect that it would have on the host property and the area.

11. For the reasons discussed above, I find that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. Consequently, I find conflict with policies in the Hammersmith and Fulham Local Plan and supporting supplementary guidance. In particular, policy DC4L of the Local Plan which includes detailed design policy relating to alterations and extensions of existing buildings aimed at encouraging a high standard of design. This policy includes the requirements that development should be compatible with the scale and character of existing development and appropriate in terms of scale, form, height and mass.

Conservation area

12. The appeal property sits within the Fulham Reach Conservation Area. As such, I have had regard to the duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The Framework notes that not all elements of a conservation area will contribute to its significance. The appeal property, whilst pleasant, makes a modest contribution to the conservation area. Its value is gained from its traditional appearance and proportions and the unassuming impact it has on the overall street scene.
13. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development in combination with other extensions would give the appeal property additional prominence in the street scene. The result would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. I therefore find conflict with policies in the Hammersmith and Fulham Local Plan, in particular KCAG3 concerning standards of development in conservation areas.
14. I have considered Policy in the Framework on potential impacts on heritage assets, including conservation areas. Despite the harm identified above, I find the level of harm to be less than substantial. Notwithstanding this, I see no public benefits in the evidence that weigh in favour of the proposal. As such, I do not consider that paragraph 196 of the Framework is engaged in this case.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons and taking account of other matters raised in the appeal, the appeal is dismissed.

D. R. McCreery

INSPECTOR