



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Andrew Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/20/3246217

18 Ruislip Street, London SW17 8PD

- 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 Tommy Kwong against the decision of the London Borough of Wandsworth Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/3742, dated 29 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 November 2019.
 - The development is a single storey rear extension.
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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.

Procedural Matter

3. The application is submitted retrospectively and during the site visit I observed that the works have been carried out. Accordingly, I have considered the proposal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Totterdown Fields Conservation Area; and
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties at 16 and 20 Ruislip Street with regard to outlook and privacy.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character & Appearance

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey mid-terrace dwelling located on the western side of Ruislip Street opposite the junction with Coteford Street within the Totterdown Fields Conservation Area (the 'Conservation Area').
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6. The Conservation Area covers a large residential area in Tooting, and its significance derives from its representation of a cottage estate influenced by the Garden City and Arts & Crafts movements. The character of the estate is established by similar patterns and materials throughout the estate which contributes positively to the townscape. Groups of individual houses have been composed as single large buildings, and therefore each terrace appears as a single composition. The appeal property is typical of the majority of houses in the Conservation Area in that it appears cottage-like and features yellow stock brickwork at ground floor, upper storey roughcast render and a slate roof.
7. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this respect national policy on heritage assets, which includes conservation areas, is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At paragraph 192, it sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
8. The proposal would result in the retention of the rear extension, balustrades, patio and raised decking. Whilst I acknowledge there are properties forming part of the same terrace as the appeal dwelling that feature rear extensions of similar depth as the development proposed to be retained, I find that the rear extension in question appears bulkier and more dominant. Indeed, the rear extensions in the vicinity are either smaller in scale or built with mono-pitch roofs whereas this extension is flat-roofed and does not reduce in height as it extends away from the building. This roof profile coupled with the use of inappropriate materials such as white paint render, thick uPVC window framing and cladding detracts from the character of the host dwelling which is finished with yellow stock brickwork at ground floor and roughcast render to the first floor. The mass and bulk of the extension appears to dominate the rear of the host dwelling and disrupts the cohesive appearance of the terrace as a whole.
9. Furthermore, the thick rendered balustrade and raised decking are uncharacteristic of the area and jar with the host dwelling. The Totterdown Fields Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy document (the 'Conservation Area Appraisal') states that boundary treatments in back gardens are usually marked by timber fences and that where replacement is necessary, it should be carried out with materials to match the original pattern of development. In this instance, the solid balustrades and decking fail to sensitively harmonise with their surroundings.
10. Given the above, I conclude the development does not preserve the character and appearance of the Totterdown Fields Conservation Area. It therefore conflicts with Policies PL1 and IS3 of Wandsworth's Core Strategy document as well as Policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the Development Management Policies Local Plan (the 'local plan') and the Housing Supplementary Planning Document which together seek to ensure proposals and extensions are well designed, contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area in which they lie, and protect heritage assets. It also fails to adhere to the Conservation Area Appraisal and guidance in the NPPF which together seek to ensure heritage assets are preserved and enhanced. I consider there are no public benefits that outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

Living Conditions

11. The appeal property lies on higher ground than the neighbouring property to the south at No.20. Consequently, the extension and solid balustrade along the common boundary, although not excessive in depth, appear tall, obtrusive and dominant when viewed from the rear elevation and garden area of No.20. I also find that the development has an overbearing impact on No.16 in light of the height and bulk of the rear extension on the common boundary.
12. The decking is raised by a substantial amount and extends out beyond the patio to a significant degree. This allows the occupiers of the appeal property to peer over both boundary fences with ease. In my view, this is an unacceptable relationship with the adjoining dwellings and results in a loss of privacy for the neighbouring occupants.
13. The cumulative bulk and poor design of the rear extension and solid balustrades results in a visually obtrusive development which is harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of 16 and 20 Ruislip Street with regards to their outlook and, coupled with the excessively raised decking, their privacy. The development thus conflicts with Policy DMS1 of the local plan which seeks to ensure proposals are well-designed and do not harm the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Other Matters

14. I note the appellant's comments suggesting the differences with the previously permitted extension under Ref 2018/4190 granted in October 2018 are minor. However, the differences between the development I observed on my site visit and the previously permitted plans appear substantial. The approved extension had a pitched roof, was finished with materials to match the host dwelling and did not include solid balustrades and raised decking. I therefore reject the view that the two proposals are similar.
15. I also acknowledge the appellant's comments regarding the financial cost of the development. Whilst I sympathise with this concern it has had no bearing on my decision.

Recommendation

16. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR