
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2020

by Martin Small BA (Hons) BPI DipCM MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/20/3255328

41 Blairderry Road, London, SW2 4SD

- 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 Ms Myrah Peju Fabunmi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 20/00612/FUL, dated 13 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'enlargement of rear dormer along with improvements to insulation, and installation of solar panels'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the enlargement of rear dormer along with improvements to insulation, and installation of solar panels at 41 Blairderry Road, London, SW2 4SD in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/00612/FUL, dated 13 February 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings: 015 001 Rev A; 015 005 Rev A; 015 010 Rev A; 015 011 Rev A; 015 012 Rev A; 015 013 Rev A; 015 014 Rev A; and 015 015 Rev A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the rear dormer and in the external finish of the insulation hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Procedural Matter

2. During the course of the determination of this appeal, the Council issued a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development (Proposed) in respect of the proposed solar panels. The Council has therefore withdrawn its second reason for refusal which related to these panels¹.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

¹ E-mail dated 11 September 2020

Reasons

4. Blairderry Road is an established residential street with predominantly 2-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings with pitched and hipped or gable roofs set back from the footway with small front gardens and hardstandings. At the southern end of the road are contemporary developments of apartments and approximately halfway along the road is the rear of the very large Streatham Hill Theatre.
5. The road therefore has a somewhat mixed character in terms of building design but the older houses have a characteristic regular pattern of development and building form. A number of these houses have rear dormers, including 31 and 37 Blairderry Road (Nos 31 and 37), in proximity to the appeal property. The side elevations of some these dormers can be glimpsed between the pairs of properties, but they are not prominent in the street scene.
6. The appeal property is the end dwelling of a terrace of six properties with a gabled side elevation. The property has a 2-storey extension to the side, a single storey rear extension and an existing small dormer window in the rear roofslope. An access between the property and Streatham Hill Theatre leads to a private rear parking court for apartments fronting Streatham Hill.
7. The Lambeth Building Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2015) sets out that roof extensions should be subordinate to and protect the design integrity of the host dwelling. The roof of the proposed rear dormer would be below the existing ridgeline of the host property and would be inset slightly from the sides of the dwelling and the eaves along the rear elevation. The rear elevation of the property has already been altered by the previous extensions. Therefore, although the dormer would be large and result in a change to the roof form of the dwelling, I consider that it would be subordinate to and not unacceptably dominate or overwhelm the host property as a whole, including the previous extensions. Furthermore, the original roofline would still be evident.
8. The bulk of the proposed dormer would only be readily apparent when viewed from the parking court or the rear windows of the apartments on Streatham Hill rather than from the public realm. It would be seen from the court and the windows in the context of the existing large rear dormers at Nos 31 and 37, which also have large glazed windows. The dormer would not affect the front roofslope and whilst the side elevation of the dormer would be seen at an oblique angle when passing, it would be hidden in views along the street. The dormer would therefore not be prominent in the street scene, a characteristic of the other existing rear dormer extensions along Blairderry Road. The dormer would thus maintain the character and appearance of the road.
9. No details of the depth of the proposed insulation have been submitted. However, the submitted drawings indicate that the insulation would not result in a material change in the appearance of the property, with the external finish to match the existing finish on that part of the property where the insulation is to be applied. I therefore consider that this would not unacceptably affect the appearance of the host dwelling.
10. I note that a previous appeal against the refusal of permission for a rear dormer was dismissed. However, I do not have the full details of that previous proposal nor have I been provided with a copy of the appeal decision. In any

event, I have determined the appeal before me on its own merits in accordance with the current development plan.

11. I therefore conclude that the proposals would not unacceptably adversely affect the character and appearance of the host property or of the area. The proposals would therefore accord in this respect with Policies Q5 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan (2015) (the Local Plan). These policies require extensions to reinforce the local distinctiveness of Lambeth through subordination and respecting the architectural integrity of the original building. The proposals would also accord with the general thrust of Policy EN4 which seeks to secure sustainable design and construction.

Other Matters

12. The appeal property is within the setting of the Grade II listed Streatham Hill Theatre and the Streatham High Road and Streatham Hill Conservation Area, in which the Theatre and the apartment buildings fronting Streatham Hill are located. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires me to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building.
13. The Theatre is listed as an unusually lavish example of a theatre built in the short-lived revival of building in 1929-30 and as a suburban example of this date the building may be unique. The setting of its principal elevation comprises the mixed commercial and residential development of Streatham Hill whilst the setting of the rear and sides of the building are suburban residential properties.
14. The appeal property makes a small but positive contribution to the setting of the Theatre as part of its wider important suburban setting. The property would remain in residential use with the proposed works completed. The dormer would not obstruct any significant views of the Theatre or otherwise diminish the ability to appreciate its significance. The proposals would therefore preserve the setting of the Theatre.
15. The special interest of the Conservation Area lies in the historical origins of Streatham High Road and development following the opening of railway stations in Streatham. This development includes the impressive commercial and purpose-built residential apartment blocks dating from the late Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war eras, which contribute substantially to the Area's character and appearance. The appeal property makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Area. The dormer would not significantly affect the character or appearance of the Area nor diminish the ability to appreciate its significance.

Conditions

16. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement, the Council has suggested conditions requiring compliance with the approved plans and requiring materials to match those of the existing dwelling were the appeal to be allowed. I consider these to be necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of the character and appearance of the host property and wider area, but I have amended the condition relating to materials to be more precise.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to the other matters, the appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Martin Small

INSPECTOR