



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 17 August 2020

by G D Jones BSc(Hons) DipTP DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2020

Appeal A - Ref: APP/X5990/Y/20/3246252

27 Queen's Grove, London NW8 6HJ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Spink Property LLP against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 19/08045/LBC, dated 16 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2020.
 - The works proposed are described as *erection of a two storey side extension following demolition of existing side garage; levelling of front driveway and alterations to the front boundary treatment.*
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Appeal B - Ref: APP/X5990/D/20/3246249

27 Queen's Grove, London NW8 6HJ

- 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 Spink Property LLP against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 19/08044/FULL, dated 16 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as *erection of a two storey side extension following demolition of existing side garage; levelling of front driveway and alterations to the front boundary treatment.*
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

3. As the proposal is in a conservation area and relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect that the proposed works and development would have on 27 Queen's Grove as a Grade II listed building and on the character or appearance of the St John's Wood Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises 27 Queen's Grove, a single dwelling. It is a listed building at Grade II (the listed building). The listing refers to its group value. It lies within the St John's Wood Conservation Area (the SJWCA).
6. The area in the vicinity of the appeal site is largely residential and relatively low density, including large detached and semi-detached villas set in generous gardens, with open gaps providing glimpses between buildings to trees and greenery beyond. These features and characteristics contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the SJWCA and it is principally from these that its significance derives.
7. The listed building dates from the early to mid-19th Century. While it was originally built as one of a pair of villas, the other half of the pair, No 26, was demolished and rebuilt, adjoining the party wall of No 27, in the latter half of the 20th Century. No 27 itself has been subject to extension and alteration, including a full height side extension in the late 19th Century, and the addition of dormer windows and rendering of the front façade more recently. Its plot was also widened at some point during the second half of the 20th Century through the acquisition of a roughly 3m wide strip of land that previously formed part of No 28. The listed building's significance and special interest lies primarily in it being a good example of a vernacular villa that is typical of the SJWCA.
8. The proposals primarily comprise what would be a reasonably substantial two-storey side extension to replace a modest single storey garage. It would stand on the strip of land that was acquired to enlarge the plot, while its two storeys would be at the lower ground and ground floor levels of the existing listed building. The garage which stood on this land has recently been removed.
9. The removal of the garage represents an improvement, due to its unsympathetic, functional design and as it serves to reveal more of the host listed building. However, the benefit is reasonably modest given its very limited scale and as it would have clearly read as a modern addition.
10. In contrast, while its siting would be more sympathetic to the floorplan of its host compared to the garage, the proposed extension would be considerably more substantial. When combined with the previous full height side extension it would double the width of the historic core, thereby diminishing its legibility as a historic building. The resulting overall built form would also be uncharacteristically out of scale with the site's proportions. The extension would also fill a significantly greater portion of the gap between Nos 27 and 28 compared to the garage, thereby diminishing an important characteristic of the SJWCA.
11. Consequently, the extension would harm the significance and special interest of the listed building. In addition to the impact of the reduction in the gap to its side, the harm to the listed building, as a villa that is typical of the historic development of the area, would also be considerably detrimental to the significance of the SJWCA.
12. In making these assessments I have considered all of the evidence, including that the proposed extension would be set back a little from the principal front

elevation of the host building and would incorporate design details that draw on those of the listed building. However, the extension would, nonetheless, have a detrimental effect on both the listed building and the SJWCA for the reasons outlined above.

13. The resulting harm to the listed building's and to the SJWCA's significance would both be less than substantial in the terms of para 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Given the statutory duties outlined above regarding listed buildings and conservation areas, the identified harm to the two heritage assets each carry substantial weight against the proposed development, such that they comfortably outweigh the relatively modest public benefits, including the removal of the garage and the proposed boundary treatment improvements.
14. Therefore, the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building and the character and appearance of the SJWCA, thus failing to satisfy the requirements of the Act and para 193 of the Framework. It would also conflict with Policies S25 (Heritage) and S28 (Design) of the Westminster City Plan, November 2016, and Policies DES 1 (Urban Design and Conservation), DES 5 (Alterations and Extensions), DES 9 (Conservation Areas) and DES 10 (A) (Listed Buildings) of the City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan, January 2007.

Other Matters

15. I note the other appeal decisions that are included within the evidence. However, as I am not familiar with all of the circumstances of those cases and bearing in mind that appeals must be determined on their individual merits, they have not altered my overall decision.