



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/20/3249760

41 Rectory Grove, London SW4 0DX

- 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 Mrs Olesen Shaw against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 19/04688/FUL, dated 18 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2020.
 - The development proposal seeks to sympathetically extend the end of terrace dwelling in a complementary and respectful manner to the host building to the gable end. Landscaping works to the front and rear gardens to set the new building are also proposed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was carried out by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of host dwelling and the setting of the Clapham Conservation Area (CCA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is on the east side of Rectory Grove, on the inside of a bend in the road, and close to the northern boundary of the CCA. I have not been provided with a conservation area appraisal, but from the information before me I note the conservation area covers a wide area to the south of the site. From my observations on site I found the portion of the CCA closest to the appeal site to be characterised by the varied age and styles of the buildings which are predominantly set in small terraces. The buildings are traditional in their design and materials, with very few modern features present, albeit I observed a dwelling at No 43 Rectory Grove, which appears to be a later infill which does not replicate the character or appearance of the CCA.

5. The appeal site contains a two-storey, end of terrace dwelling which, due to the bend in the road, presents both its front and side elevations to the road. The space between the appeal site and the property to the south is loosely triangular and has been laid out in hardstanding. It presents as an awkward, almost left over space between the two buildings and does not add positively to the street scene.
6. Whilst the scale of the new extension would be subordinate to the host property, and it would be constructed on the space between Nos 41 and 43, I find that its design, including the fenestration would not respect the architectural detailing of the host property. Whilst noting the appellant's intention to construct a contemporary infill extension, I find that it would not be complimentary as asserted, rather it would present itself as a prominent, bulky, jarring addition which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene. This harm would be exacerbated by the use of solely red brick in contrast to the host dwelling, which is in yellow brick, with only detailing picked out in red brick. The boundary wall and landscaping proposed would not mitigate this harm, indeed the new wall would also be a jarring feature because of the coursing of the bricks as proposed.
7. The appellant has referred me to a number of examples of modern development in support of her case. However, I have not been directed to their location or the circumstances of the development. I therefore find that they have little relevance to the proposal before me. Nevertheless, all development must be assessed on its own merit.
8. Given my findings above it follows that the proposal would erode the contribution the host dwelling makes to the local area and the setting of the CCA, and as a consequence harm to the significance of the conservation area as a designated heritage asset would result. In circumstances such as this, the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) makes it clear at paragraph 194 that clear and convincing justification is required for harmful development. Whilst the harm that would result to the significance of the CCA would be less than substantial, the Framework makes it clear at paragraph 196 that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. The appellant has raised that the extension would provide additional space and improve the internal layout of the property and that the boundary wall would improve the safety of the occupiers. However, whilst I have no doubt that these issues may be of benefit to the appellant, they do not amount to a public benefit in favour of the scheme. Moreover, no substantive evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the site is currently unsafe or suffers from anti-social behaviour and this limits the weight that I can attach to this matter.
10. It is also suggested that the development would allow for an improvement to the existing accessibility of the site and would improve its ecological and environmental sustainability. It has not, however, been demonstrated that the proposal is required for these improvements to be made. I also find that only the ecological and environmental improvements would result in a public benefit, but that given the scale of the scheme these benefits would be likely to be very limited.
11. Accordingly, I find that there is no public benefit cited which outweighs the harm to the significance of the CCA as a designated heritage asset.

12. The proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Further harm would be caused to the setting of the CCA, which is not outweighed by any public benefit. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policies Q2, Q5, Q9, Q11, Q15 and Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan, which collectively seek for development to respond positively to its surroundings, including the host dwelling, and any heritage assets.
13. Although the Council have referred to a supplementary planning document, no such document has been submitted and as such I have been unable to assess whether or not the proposal accords with this.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has referred to an amended landscaping scheme, but no such scheme has been put before me. I have assessed the proposal on the basis of the evidence before me.

Recommendation

15. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR