



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02/11/2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/D/20/3251497

94 Browning Avenue, Hanwell, London, W7 1AU

- 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 Miss Fabienne Lefeuvre against the decision of the Council to the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 200693FUL, dated 10 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the street scene and the Cuckoo Estate Conservation Area (CECA).

Reasons

3. The Appeal site is located within the CECA which comprises a traditional Garden suburb estate built by London County Council in the 1930's. It was built on the slopes of Cuckoo Hill and around the listed former Hanwell Poor Law School and associated parkland which influenced its layout. The residential streets within the CECA are characterised by small terraces and groups of semi-detached two storey houses set back from the street scene behind modest sized front gardens that are primarily enclosed by hedges. The groups/rows of houses have varied building lines and are routinely arranged around small grassed areas. This together with spacious tree lined roads and grass verges contributes to the spacious and verdant character and appearance of the CECA.
4. The dwellings within CECA are designed from a limited range of designs and materials and are visually uncluttered. Typically, they are uniformly sited and symmetrically designed and have visually uncluttered front elevations and hipped plain tiled roofs. Some rows of dwellings include symmetrically positioned front facing gable roof details. These design features all make a strong contribution to the character, appearance and significance of the CECA.
5. The appeal property is located at the end of a symmetrically designed terrace, which is set at right angles to two other terraces and which are arranged

- around a cul-de-sac and open grassed area. The terraces all have fully hipped roofs and visually uncluttered roof slopes and front elevations.
6. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when assessing proposals for new development within a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.
 7. Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (Framework) states that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to its conservation. Any harm requires clear and convincing justification. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
 8. Consistent with this and amongst other things, policy 7C of the London Borough of Ealing Development Management - Development Plan Document (DPD) and policies 7.4 and 7.8 of The London Plan 2016 (London Plan), state that development within conservation areas should avoid the introduction of design and materials that undermine the significance of the conservation area. New development should be informed by the surrounding historic environment and should conserve the significance of heritage assets, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.
 9. In relation to design the Framework, policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan and policies 7.4 and 7B of the DPD seek to ensure that new development is well designed and complements existing built areas in relation to their context, street sequence, building pattern, scale, design, materials and detailing.
 10. The Cuckoo Estate Conservation Area Management Plan explains that the quality of the CECA can be damaged to a significant degree by the loss of historic details, including the roofs of buildings. Roof extensions that include hip to gable additions should be avoided.
 11. The proposal includes the replacement of the side roof slope with a hip to gable extension and a flat roofed rear dormer. The rear dormer addition would project close to the ridge and eaves lines of the dwelling and would include a pair of full height glazed openings, with a smaller window to one side.
 12. Whilst the proposed hip to gable extension would be located at the end of a small cul-de-sac it would nonetheless be visible from the street scene, where it would upset the symmetry of the host terrace and be at odds with the strong hipped roof characteristic of the CECA. It would also partially fill the open gap between the end of the property and the end elevation of the adjacent terrace. This would have an enclosing impact and would again upset the uniformity in the size and shape of the gaps between terraces within the cul-de-sac and other similar cul-de-sacs in the CECA.
 13. The proposed rear dormer addition would not be visible from the street scene; its fenestration would be in line with the first floor windows below; and the rear face and cheeks of the extension would be clad in tiles to match the existing roof. However, the proposed dormer addition would be visible from the grounds of the expansive flats development to the rear, where it would appear bulky and out of keeping with the simple form of the existing roofs within this

part of the CECA. The proposed full height windows would similarly appear prominent and out of character with the roofscape.

14. As a result of these factors the proposal would materially detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the terrace and the street scene. It would harm the character and appearance of the CECA and detract from its significance. Whilst the harm to the significance of the CECA would be less than substantial, this harm nonetheless needs to be weighed against any public benefits that would be brought about by the proposal.
15. Public benefit may be anything which delivers economic, social, or environmental objectives (Planning Practice Guidance paragraph 18a-020-20190723) and must flow from the proposed development. There would be short-term economic benefit during construction works, but these would be limited in time and extent. There could also be some economic and social benefits resulting from the employment of an au-pair, as they may support local services and facilities. I do not consider these public benefits to be sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm which I have identified.
16. I have also taken into account the personal benefits the proposal would result in for the appellant and her family. However, these do not outweigh the long term harm that would be caused to the CECA by the proposal.
17. Finally, I have noted that there are a considerable number of roof extensions located in the area, although I did not see any within the CECA. Rather than set a precedent for the proposal, they serve to illustrate how such additions can materially change the character and appearance of dwellings. As such, these examples have not influenced this decision, which has been assessed against the prevailing planning policies and on its own merits.
18. I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the CECA. It would also result in less than significant harm to the significance of the CECA and this harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits resulting from the proposal. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with policies 7.4, 7B & 7C of the DPD, policies 7.4, 7.6 & 7.8 of the London Plan and sections 12 and 16 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR