



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 November 2020

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/20/3246071

42 Wades Hill, Winchmore Hill N21 1BG

- 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 Panos Ioannou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 19/03202/HOU, dated 14 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is roof extension comprised of a rear dormer and front slope roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter and Main Issue

2. The Council has failed to provide as part of their appeal submission a copy of the correct 'delegated report'¹ as applies to the appeal proposal before me, despite having been requested to do so. The 'delegated report' which relates to the appeal proposal is however publicly available on the Council's website and, having regard to the process by which this appeal proceeds, I have determined the appeal accordingly. I am satisfied that neither party would be prejudiced as a consequence.
3. Having regard to the above, the main issue in this case is whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within the Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area (WHGCA), for which the Council have produced (along with the Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area) Character Appraisal (CA) and Management Proposals (MP) documents. Within the WHGCA, the CA identifies four distinct character areas, within the first of which, The Green, the appeal site lies.
5. Wades Hill's character is noted as being initially similar to that of the Green, with larger Victorian and Edwardian buildings, reducing in scale as the road heads away from the Green downhill towards the appeal site. No. 42 lies within a short two storey terraced block. The CA notes Wades Hill as being an area of disparate groups of building with a diversity of architectural styles.

¹ A 'delegated report' in respect of a previous scheme, LPA Ref No: 19/02197/HOU, was submitted with the Council's appeal submissions

6. Both the CA and the MP note the threat to the character and appearance of the WHGCA from unsympathetic change, including the loss of original details such as the replacement of roof slates with concrete roof tiles. Although there is no specific reference to the addition of dormer windows or rooflights, the process of gradual erosion of character and damage to appearance through cumulative change is identified as a threat. The appeal property, the terraced block within which it is sited and the group of buildings on Harwoods Yard are all noted as buildings which make a positive contribution to the WHGCA.
7. The proposed dormer window would occupy almost all of the rear roof plane of the appeal property. Whilst it would be inset from the eaves, ridge and edges of the roof broadly in line with the minimum requirements set out by Development Management Document (DMD) policy DMD13², this policy also requires that, amongst other factors, proposals be of an appropriate size and location within the roof plane and be in keeping with the character of the property.
8. Despite achieving the minimum insets as set out by DMD policy DMD13, the dormer window would occupy almost all of the rear roof plane and would dominate the rear, and rear roof, of the appeal property. As such, it would not be in keeping with the otherwise modest character and scale of the property. Situated at the rear of the property, it would be widely visible from Wades Hill but it would be a clearly visible, dominant and incongruous feature within the small and intimate Harwoods Yard development to the rear.
9. I acknowledge that the neighbouring property at No. 44 also has a dormer window at the rear of a similar design and proportions to those proposed in this instance. However, the immediate visual impact of that example is largely offset behind the two-storey outrigger shared between Nos 42 and 44 which hides it from ground level views. Given the alternating form of the rear outriggers along the rear of this terraced block however, the proposed dormer would be significantly more conspicuous than that at No. 44 when viewed from Harwoods Yard between the outriggers of Nos 42 and 40.
10. Rather than providing support for the appeal proposal, the presence of the existing dormer window at the rear of No. 44 serves to highlight the bulk and massing that would result at the rear, and the extent to which it would dominate the rear roof slope of the appeal property. In isolation the proposal would be harmful by virtue of its dominant form and presence and would erode the modest character and scale of No. 42. Cumulatively with that at No. 44, it would dominate not only the rear of No. 42, but also the rear elevation of the terraced block through the erosion of the rhythm and spacing created by the outriggers and the gaps between them, and their roofs. As with No. 42, this would be harmful to the modest scale and character of the terraced block and the more intimate character of Harwoods Yard.
11. Thus, for the reasons I have set out, the proposed dormer window extension would not be of an appropriate size or location within the roof plane of No 42. Its incongruous scale and appearance would render it not in keeping with the character of the property and it would be disruptive within the group of properties in which it would be located. Although at the rear of the property it would also be dominant when viewed from Harwoods Yard which would render the proposal in conflict with DMD policy DMD13. The proposal would also be in

² DMD policy DMD13 – Roof Extensions

- conflict with DMD policy DMD37 as it would fail to achieve high quality design with insufficient regard to its surroundings.
12. I am mindful of the comparison drawn by the appellant to a dormer window extension at the rear of 11 Wade's Grove but I do not have the details of that proposal before me and I note that the appellant concedes that its permission (and also that of No. 44) pre-dates current DMD policies. Nor do I see particular tension between the latest, and also perhaps earlier, iterations of the CA identifying Nos 42 and 44, and 11 Wade's Grove, as examples as contributing positive to the character of the WHGCA and not specifically referring to the presence of dormer windows and rooflights as threats to the WHGCA. I have in any event determined the appeal on its merits, finding harm for the reasons I have set out above and I give these matters limited weight.
 13. The proposal also includes the insertion of two rooflights within the front facing roof slope. I am satisfied that the two rooflights would be modestly sized and in longer views up and down Wades Hill would be rendered largely hidden by the protruding party wall parapets between each property. Nor are rooflights particularly uncommon amongst the wide range of building types and architectural styles on Wades Hill. However, the absence of harm in this respect would not be sufficient to overcome the harm identified above.
 14. For the reasons set out, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area, contrary to DMD policy DM44. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the character or appearance of the WHGCA, albeit that that harm would be less than significant. I am statutorily required to pay special attention to the desirability of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area, whilst the Framework advises that any harm arising should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
 15. The absence of harm in relation to the proposed rooflights on the front roof slope does not amount to a public benefit. Nor would the use of matching materials to clad the dormer cheeks or the use of fenestration details to reflect that of the main house have any more than a neutral impact. The creation of additional internal accommodation would be a private, not public, benefit and so does not provide support in the context of the Framework. There are no other benefits advanced, public or otherwise, and I therefore conclude that there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm that I have identified above. The proposal would therefore also be contrary to the heritage aims and objectives set out in the Framework.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR