



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2020

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/20/3257063

50 Park Road, Chiswick, London W4 3HH

- 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 and Mrs Campbell against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01255/50/P2, dated 24 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as the removal of unsympathetic alterations to façade at roof level and replacement with a front gable to respect character of Park Road, Chiswick.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for development described as the removal of unsympathetic alterations to façade at roof level and replacement with a front gable to respect character of Park Road, Chiswick at 50 Park Road, Chiswick, London W4 3HH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 01255/50/P2, dated 24 April 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with approved plan reference P03, dated 16.04.2020.
 - 3) The materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's decision notice sets out the description of development as alterations to the front and rear roof of the house, including the conversion of the existing mono-pitched front roof slope to a front-facing gable with associated changes to the main roof, an increase in the roof pitch of the existing two-storey side addition, and the erection of a dormer in the rear roof slope. This is a more accurate description of the works that form the proposed development in full. This description is also shown on the planning appeal form. The scheme clearly therefore also includes other roof alterations which include a dormer window in the rear. The Council do not appear to object to the insertion of the dormer, and I have no reason to disagree. My findings therefore focus on the alterations to the roof.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether or not the appeal scheme would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Chiswick House Conservation Area (CHCA)

Reasons

4. The appeal building is one half of a pair of (originally) two storey semidetached dwellings set back from and facing the road. Park Road is an attractive verdant tree lined straight single carriageway street with dwellings either side. Dwellings are semidetached and terraced and largely original. Some have hipped roofs but a dominant and prominent type in the street is a period two storey design with rooms in the roof space, identified by a steep forward projecting and oversailing gable containing a narrow centralised window.
5. The pair of dwellings to which the appeal building belongs would have likely appeared the same as the pair at Nos 44 and 46. They are the only examples of this building design in the immediate area. They are two storeys with forward projecting bay windows over two floors. The roof is shallow and hipped. Nos 44 and 46 are largely original examples, retaining a shared porch canopy to their centralised entrance doors.
6. The changes to the pair at Nos 48 and 50 can only be described as unfortunate, No 48 specifically. The appeal building has a lean to roof shape above the first floor which runs from the eaves to the top of a second floor flat roof on No 48. As being subject to substantial changes to the original form of the buildings, the pair appear as an obvious and stand out anomaly in the street scene. And not in a good way.
7. The appeal scheme seeks to amend the roof form of No 50 by replicating the steep oversailing gable detail of other buildings in the street scene. Whilst arguably not typical of the design of the aforementioned two pairs of semis, the design is of a far superior quality to that of the existing situation which appears as something of an after thought to link it to No 48. The appeal scheme is not able to influence what is done to the poor roof addition to No 48, but it can at the very least make the best of what is an unacceptable anomalous situation in design and appearance terms. The pair would remain an anomaly in the street scene, but the changes to No 50 would go some way to softening its impact.
8. The proposed works would include the addition of a new roof section to the two storey side extension. Whilst this would change and the pitch increase, it would still be subservient to the new roof on the main building and thus retain its appearance as such. I do not therefore feel it would give rise to harm.
9. I agree, to an extent, with the Council that the changes to the roof of No 50 would add bulk and thus obviousness. This obviousness would to my mind be tempered by the design approach but also the context in which it would be seen. The proposed roof shape would not bear any resemblance to the original which can be clearly seen on Nos 44 and 46 but then the existing one doesn't. As I have said, there is something of the best of a bad situation in this particular case that is worthy of positive consideration.
10. The Council refer to section 6 of their Residential Extension Guidelines 2017. In so doing, they highlight that new extensions, to roofs specifically, in Conservation Areas, should not dominate the host building in either design,

scale or bulk terms. I agree that the roof extension in the case of the appeal scheme would not be modest, it is comprehensive but as I have said above it does achieve a positive. I am also mindful of the fact that the above are guidelines and non compliance therewith would not be the same as such with the development plan. In addition, the guidelines go on to state that roof extensions in Conservation Areas are more restrictive because of the effect they might (my emphasis) have on their character and appearance. As I have explained above, I do not feel this would be the case here.

11. For the above reasons, I am of the view that the appeal scheme would ensure that the character and appearance of the CHCA is preserved by the lack of harm that the proposed development would give rise to. This would therefore result in it being in accordance with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the Local Plan¹. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that new development, extensions to dwellings specifically, is of a high quality and contextually appropriate design and appearance that creates attractive places. They also aim to conserve and take opportunities to enhance the significance of the borough's heritage assets.

Conditions

12. I have attached conditions setting out the timescale for the commencement of development and identified the approved plan for clarity and enforceability. In the interests of good design and appearance I have specified that materials and finishes should match the existing building.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons and subject to the conditions set out above, the appeal is allowed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR

¹ London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan Volume One 2015-2030