



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 November 2020

by Martin H Seddon BSc MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/D/20/3256745

185 Hammersmith Grove, London, W6 0NP

- 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 Phil Fretwell against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.
 - The application Ref: 2020/01250/FUL, dated 21 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is extension to existing third floor preserving terrace use and reinstatement of butterfly roof brickwork at rear.
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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 building, terrace, and Hammersmith Grove Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The Hammersmith Grove Conservation Area is based upon the wide, straight, tree lined road of Hammersmith Grove and its associated early Victorian semi-detached villas and terraces. No.185 Hammersmith Grove is located at the end of 'Verulam Terrace' with its similar distinctive buildings. It is classed as a Building of Merit, along with the terrace. The terrace was built as a symmetrical neo-classical stucco set-piece. No.185 forms a prominent marker building, because like No.193 Hammersmith Grove, it is taller than its neighbouring terraced buildings. Extensions of various forms have been added at the rear of buildings in the terrace, including at roof level, with butterfly roofs, horizontal parapets, mansard roofs and roof terraces. The prominent multi-flue chimney stacks are a positive historic feature, adding to the visual interest of the roofscape.
4. The appeal building was subject to appeal ref: APP/H5390/D/18/3208036 in which the Inspector dismissed the erection of an additional floor at roof level following the removal of the existing roof structure. The Inspector considered that, although the proposed extension would make effective use of the roof space, it would unbalance the terrace and reduce the prominence and legibility of a multi-flue chimney which makes an important contribution to the roofscape and sky silhouette of the terrace.

5. The building has a raised rear parapet wall and a terrace. There is a small roof extension which is not particularly prominent in the street scene. The appeal proposal would involve the erection of an additional floor at roof level, on top of part of the existing roof terrace following removal of the existing roof structure. A butterfly roof would be reinstated to the rear elevation. The extension would cover less roof space than the previous proposal which was dismissed on appeal.
6. The appellant has submitted a Visual Impact Assessment to indicate that the proposed extension would not be seen when the front elevation of the building was viewed from positions directly opposite from Hammersmith Grove. That is due to the height of the building and also because the extension would be set back from the front edge of the roof. However, part of the extension could be glimpsed when the side elevation was viewed at an angle from the vicinity of the Benbow Road/Hammersmith Grove junction.
7. The rear elevation of No.185 and its neighbouring dwellings are visible at one point from Benbow Road because the appeal building is flanked by a pair of semi-detached villas which are lower in height. The rear elevation of No.185 is also visible from its garden and the gardens of neighbouring buildings. I consider that the proposed extension would be unduly prominent. It would add bulk and height to the building and would appear less subservient than the current roof extension. Although a butterfly roof would be created, the visual benefit from this would be reduced because the mass of the extension, with its rear facing window, could be seen directly behind the new butterfly roof structure. The roof extension, although smaller in size than the previous appeal proposal would still detract from the roof silhouette and views of the multi-flue chimney stack and pots.
8. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when assessing proposals for new development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The objectives of Hammersmith and Fulham Local Plan policy DC8 regarding heritage and conservation are generally consistent with national policy. Local Plan policies DC1 and DC4 seek to ensure good design in new developments and extensions. Key Principles BM2 and CAG3 of the Planning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) seek to avoid harmful alteration to Buildings of Merit and buildings in conservation areas.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
10. I consider that the proposal would have a significant detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the building, terrace, and Hammersmith Grove Conservation Area. It would conflict with Local Plan policies DC1, DC4, DC8 and Key Principles CAG3 and BM2 of the Planning Guidance SPD. However, because there would only be limited impact on views of the front elevation of the building the amount of harm would be less than substantial. In such cases

the Framework indicates that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

11. Benefits from the proposal include the reinstatement of the butterfly roof and the creation of extra living accommodation. However, I consider that the harm from the extension to the character and appearance of the building, terrace and conservation area would not be outweighed by any public benefits of the proposal.

Conclusion

12. I have taken all other matters raised into account. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR