

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2020

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/20/3256825

89 Priory Gove, London, SW8 2PD

- 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 Ms M Squire against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 20/00318/FUL, dated 26 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a mansard roof extension with 2 front and 2 rear dormer windows.
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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 and the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is an attractive and modestly elegant 19th century mid terrace two storey home in stock brick with stucco ground floor and first floor window architraves and slate London roofs. A home to either side is virtually identical whilst beyond this the buildings vary somewhat and form an attractive established residential scene. Larkhall Park lies across the narrow road. The aesthetics of the area are very pleasing and the appeal property, which is not locally listed, makes a positive contribution to this. The proposal is as described above.

Character and appearance

4. The site lies within the Larkhall Conservation Area. There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Policy Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2015 (LP) reflects this. The 2012 Conservation Area Statement (CAS) provides appraisal and guidance. It underlines that whilst change is not always ruled out roofscape is important and care should be taken to avoid loss or inappropriate alteration of historic roofs or chimneystacks or to sanction works which appear discordant.
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5. A distinctive phenomenon of this area is that while roof heights do vary their form generally remains as originally constructed and certainly mansards are not a local feature. The appeal property is the centre of a terrace of three which are virtually unified in appearance and the roof consistency is a very pertinent part of this historic and visually pleasing situation. Regrettably the appeal scheme would run contrary to these present positive attributes. The mansard and the associated building up of the party wall would simply be out of keeping architecturally and in character terms. This development with its loss of the London roof would be ill at ease with the host property and the short terrace and the incongruity would be marked. Whilst street views would be limited they would be available in part and the scheme would clearly be seen looking to the Conservation Area from Larkhall Park. Both character and appearance would be harmed
6. Having regard to all of the above I conclude that there would be conflict with S72(1) of the Act, LP Policy Q22 and CAS guidance; there would not be preservation of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additionally, taken together, LP Policies Q5 and Q11 seek suitable high quality design and, amongst other matters, call for new works to protect the architectural integrity of a group of buildings; safeguard the existing built environment including, where applicable, roofscapes; and generally seek to protect local distinctiveness and historic character. Given the nature of the appeal scheme, I conclude that the proposal would run contrary to these policies. It would also run counter to the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document Building Alterations and Extensions 2015. This provides detailed design guidance for development which might be acceptable and it embodies over-arching objectives reflective of the LP policies; this document could not be expected to cover every eventuality.

Other matters

7. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) have been considered. Key objectives of the Framework are to protect and enhance the qualities of the built environment as well as to safeguard heritage assets; development plan policies which I cite mirror these. The Framework underlines that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. The appeal proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset however what public benefits there would be, such as some economic stimulus, would not outweigh this harm. Furthermore there are no other benefits, including to the Appellant, which to my mind would be of a scale to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area which I have identified.
8. I sympathise with the Appellant's wish to extend this dwelling and I can see that thought has been given to this individual design but as outlined above I have to look at the bigger planning picture, this specific property, and its context. I also have to look in the present timeframe and I cannot give any weight to the proposition that neighbours *may* wish to undertake the same works as those proposed and thus there *could* be some uniformity in the future *if* a decision maker found the principle acceptable. Similarly I give little weight to referenced decisions which were made some considerable time ago in a set of different physical circumstances and planning policy context. I am assessing the current proposal on its own merits. I recognise that additional

accommodation would be forthcoming and I note the arguments put forward in terms of standards of insulation and energy efficiency. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.

Overall conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR