
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2021

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/20/3262994

Wood Street Post Office, First floor flat, 87 Wood Street, Barnet EN5 4BX

- 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 M Chohan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/3496/FUL, dated 30 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is the construction of rear dormer and balcony.
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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 Wood Street Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a mid-terrace, three-storey building which has been extended to the rear. The roof of the extension continues the slope of the main roof and includes a dormer with a shallow pitched roof (application plan 489619-3 shows it with a less bulky flat roof). Notwithstanding the existing rear extension, the appeal property is typical of the properties in this part of the Conservation Area (CA) and makes a neutral contribution to its character and appearance. The rear of the property can be seen in views from Bells Hill and the falling ground level in this direction adds to its prominence
 4. The appeal proposal would add a second dormer and balcony above the existing dormer. They would serve a new third floor of residential accommodation. Of itself, the proposed dormer would be fairly modest in scale and would not exceed half the width of the roof slope. To that extent, it would comply with the advice in the Council's Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 5. However, the SPD also advises that the design of dormers requires careful attention. They should be subordinate features, there should be adequate roof slope above the dormer and they should be set in at least 1m from chimney stacks. By virtue of its position within the roof, the appeal dormer would not meet the latter two requirements. Whilst the rear roof comprises part original building and part extension, it is seen as a single, continuous slope and the existing and proposed dormers would, similarly, be seen as part of a single roof
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slope. Therefore, notwithstanding that the SPD does not specifically advise against two dormers in a single roof, the appeal dormer considered along with the existing dormer, would not be a subordinate feature in the rear roof slope of the building. There are no other examples in the vicinity of two dormers in a single roof slope. Having regard to the topography of the land to the rear of the appeal property, the dormer would be prominent in a range of public views.

6. As such, I find that the proposed dormer would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the CA and would not accord with the requirements of the SPD. Nor would it comply with Policy 7.4 of the London Plan, Policies DM01 or DM06 of the Council's Local Plan Development Management Policies 2012 or Policy CS5 of its Local Plan Core Strategy 2012. Together, these policies require development to achieve high quality design which preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the CA and respects the appearance and scale of surrounding buildings.
7. The proposal would not accord with National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) paragraphs 192 and 193 which require the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets to be taken into account and great weight to be attached to their conservation. The harm to the CA would be less than substantial and Framework paragraph 196 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, I have not been made aware of any such benefits.
8. It follows that the proposal would not accord with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR