



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 11 May 2021

by **R E Jones BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/21/3268382

9 Devonshire Mews, London W4 2HA

- 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. Scot Drummond against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01247/9/P4, dated 23 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of dormer window and associated alterations (Amended).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of dormer window and associated alterations (amended) at 9 Devonshire Mews, London W4 2HA, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 01247/9/P4, dated 23 November 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings and information: 1804-SK04, 1804-SK06, 1804-SK10, 11909-SK-10, 11909-SK-11 and Planning Statement.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. In my assessment of this case, I have had regard to a previously dismissed appeal at this site (the previous appeal)¹.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property, the surrounding area and the setting of the adjacent Chiswick High Road Conservation Area (CHRCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site (No 9 Devonshire Mews (No 9)), comprises a two-storey mid-terrace property containing two self-contained flats. The proposal, a roof extension, would project from the appeal property's rear roof plane.

¹ Appeal decision ref - APP/F5540/W/20/3253775

5. The rear of the terrace is visible from Prince of Wales Terrace, through the car park serving an adjacent block of flats. At this location the terrace's consistent roof height and rear building line is evident, as to is the somewhat varied appearance of the roofs of individual properties in the row. Existing features include the trio of cat-slide roofs at No 5, 7 and 9, shorter roof slopes at Nos 3 and 11 and a small number of rear roof extensions (Nos 1 and No 15). Some of the original roof parapets on the terrace were also visible, as well as several original brick chimney stacks. These differences are understated and do not alter the height of the terrace or fundamentally change the roof profile at the rear.
6. The appeal site is located outside but adjacent to the extensive CHRCA. The significance of this designation is derived, in part, from the commercial function of the area, along with the general uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type and period. The appeal site incorporates some of those features which contribute towards the CHRCA's special character, however, it faces away from the designation and is seen in context with modern residential flats to the west and the commercial warehousing to the north-west facing Prince of Wales Terrace. On this basis, the appeal site makes a limited contribution to the setting of the CHRCA and therefore its significance.
7. The previous appeal scheme comprised a dominant and bulky rear roof extension. That addition extended the full width of the appeal building's roof, while incorporating a very limited set down and set back from the property's roof line and eaves. In contrast, the appeal proposal incorporates an appreciably reduced scale in terms of its width and height that appears less bulky and more subordinate to the host property. The amended scheme also reveals more of the property's original 'cat-slide' roof formation, which is an inherent feature of its character. Furthermore, the proposal's dimensions, as they relate to the appeal property's roof, comply with the guidance contained in the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document² (SPD) i.e. 0.3 m below ridge level, at least 0.5 m above eaves level and at least 0.5 m from the sides of the roof .
8. Taking the above into account, the proposal's recessed and subordinate position on the host property would not unacceptably impair the architectural appearance and detailing of the host dwelling.
9. In the context of the terrace, the proposal's reduced height and position further down its roof plane would be similar to the existing rear roof extensions at Nos 1 and 15. The resulting symmetry between the appeal proposal and those other additions has a unifying effect, while also appearing consistent with the subtle variations in the appearance of the other roofs in the terrace. On this basis, the proposal would not look noticeably out of place or incongruous.
10. The Council's case refers to there being an expectation that roof additions display a greater degree of subservience where they would be proposed adjacent to conservation areas. I have not been referred to any specific guidance or policy where this is a requirement, yet I have nevertheless had regard to the proximity of the CHRCA and the proposal's effect on its special character. In this regard the proposal's location facing away from the conservation area and seen amongst more modern buildings would not lead to any harm to the conservation area's setting. I also note that similar additions to the proposal were visible at the rear of Devonshire Road to the east and Glebe Street to the south. In this context the proposal would not look out of place.

² London Borough of Hounslow Residential Extension Guidelines, Supplementary Planning Document – A Guide for Householders, adopted 20th December 2017

11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the surrounding area and the setting of the CHRCA. It would therefore accord with Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Local Plan³. Collectively, these require, amongst other things, that proposals respond to the local character and architecture of the site, as well as conserving a site's qualities and heritage. Furthermore, the proposal accords with the guidance in the SPD, insofar as it relates to the technical requirements for roof extensions.

Other Matters

12. Third party concerns have been raised in respect of the proposal's effect on the privacy of neighbours. The appeal property currently has rooflights on its rear roof plane that serve the first-floor bedroom and bathroom. Given the angle in which these are placed on the roof, existing occupiers can obtain views of the adjacent car park and flat development to the west.
13. Although the proposed development would incorporate larger windows that would be angled less obliquely, the nature of the overlooking towards the neighbouring development would not be significantly different. Therefore, in light of the existing circumstances at the site, the proposal would be unlikely to result in any altered effect on the privacy of nearby occupiers above the current situation, to the extent that living conditions would be harmed.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have considered it necessary to include a schedule of plans that the development relates to, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. Also, a condition relating to the construction of the extension in materials to match the existing dwelling is necessary to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

RE Jones

INSPECTOR

³ London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan, Volume One, 2015-2030, adopted 15 September 2015