

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 May 2021

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Decision date: 17 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/20/3261073
298-300 Munster Road, London SW6 6BH

- 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 Willmotts (Roundbell Ltd) against the decision of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2020/00929/FUL, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension to create 1-bedroom flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The planning application contained discussion of further elements which required planning approval in relation to the proposed extension such as the additional flat, size and living condition considerations, as well as the change to the shopfront to facilitate a new access. These elements were seen to be generally acceptable to the Council and I have no reason to revisit these elements of the application.

Main Issue

3. Taking the above into account, the main issue is the effect of the proposed roof extension upon the character and appearance of the locality, including the appeal building.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located along Munster Road, which leads up to a busy junction with the A3218 which connects the site to the high streets of Fulham and Hammersmith. Along this section of Munster Road development is predominantly 2 and 3 storeys with commercial uses to the ground floor level and accommodation above. The buildings are tightly knit and single bayed frontages with a traditional and functional appearance which appears to date from the late nineteenth century with details such as arched window heads with keystones, decorative cornicing with parapet roof and characteristic London Butterfly roof forms behind. Whilst there has been changes in some of the materials and shopfronts across the street scene from traditional materials, there is local character and distinctiveness in the street scene with the prevailing heights, design, uncluttered and historic roof forms and appearance which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the locality.

5. The appeal building is three storeys tall and appears to date from the mid-late twentieth century. Whilst the design of the building incorporates a wider building that is four bays wide, the design of the building has attempted to be in-keeping with the historic buildings adjoining with the matching cornicing and parapet, window proportions and positioning of windows which match the remainder of the terrace.
6. In undertaking extensions to existing buildings, Hammersmith and Fulham Local Plan 2018 (LP) Policy DC1 places an emphasis on high quality urban environments which reflects townscape, whereas LP Policy DC4 seeks that alterations and extensions are compatible with the scale and character of existing and neighbouring properties, and successfully integrated in the architectural design of the existing building. Whilst I appreciate the comments in the applicant's Statement of Case (SoC) that the site is not within a Conservation Area or is a designated building of merit, the scheme still needs to be in accordance with the Policies of the Development Plan when taken as a whole.
7. I note reference to a mansard roof extension approved by appeal¹ opposite the appeal site at No.293 Munster Road. Opposite the road, is another three storey terrace of six buildings, however in this appeal it was noted that No.291 had already had a historic extension to the roof and that the approval of a roof extension to No.293 would on this basis not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the terrace. This is not the same as the appeal site where the terrace contains no existing roof extensions and which is noted as also having a more recent appeal² dismissed for a roof extension. There were some differences in the previous appeal for the appeal site where this was a flat roof extension with vertical side and front/rear walls with mineral fibre board, whereas the appeal proposal under consideration is for a mansard roof with slate hanging tiles.
8. Whilst the mansard roof and the changing in materials does assist in reducing the visual massing and bulk of the proposed extension, some of the previous concerns of the Inspector, such as the extensions visibility within the street from long distance views and how the extension relates to neighbouring properties within the terrace remain relevant. Having visited the site myself, I concur with the opinion of the previous Inspector. Whilst in my view the proposed extension would be less harmful than the existing appeal, there remains a large amount of visual bulk and massing which is uncharacteristic for this particular building and row of terraces which causes detriment to the local character and distinctiveness of the building and the locality.
9. I appreciate that there are a number of examples of mansard roof extensions in the surrounding area, particularly along Lillie Road, however this street scene presents differently to the unaltered nature of the terrace along Munster Road which is an inherent component of its architectural integrity and character. I also note the Government's changes to permitted development rights where specific sites are able to add additional storeys to existing buildings, however this particular site does not benefit from such permitted development rights and therefore cannot be used to demonstrate the acceptability of the scheme.

¹ APP/H5390/W/15/3134866, Dated 8 April 2016

² APP/H5390/W/19/3239131, Dated 10 February 2020

10. In conclusion of this matter, the proposed extension would not successfully integrate to the architectural authenticity and integrity of the existing terrace of buildings in a way that maintains its contribution to the character and appearance of the wider area. Whilst the extension would be less prominent, the proposal would still be of a level where it is an unacceptable and discordant extension that detracts from the local distinctiveness and character of the area. It follows that the proposal would fail to comply with LP Policies DC1 and DC4 as described previously.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR