



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 5 May 2021

by L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/20/3261898

53 Cedarville Gardens, LONDON, SW16 3DA

- 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 Stefan Szymaniak against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 20/02323/FUL, dated 13 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'a loft conversion with a pitched roof side dormer and a pitched roof rear dormer, which will soften the effect of the roof changes. We will be installing two Velux windows to the front slope of the property'.
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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 building and the wider area; including whether or not the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, 53 Cedarville Gardens, is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling situated on a residential road. The property has a two-storey bay window, rough render painted blue at first floor level and exposed red brickwork on the ground floor. The semi-detached pair of which No 53 forms part has a prominent central chimney stack and is staggered in appearance, with No 53 being set at a higher level than neighbouring dwellings, due to the ground levels in the area. A lane runs along the side of the property.
4. The dwelling is located within the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area (CA) which is characterised in the vicinity of the appeal site by the spacious, tree-lined, road with similar terraces and pairs of dwellings with simple forms and a consistent palette of materials. I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
5. The proposal is for side and rear dormer windows and new rooflights to the front roof slope. Though they would be set down from the ridge line and back from the eaves, the proposed dormer windows would nevertheless be large additions to the roof scape of the host building which would visually compete with the simple design and the prominent central chimney stack. The additional

visual clutter would be at odds with the clean, simple roofscapes, particularly when viewed from the front of the dwellings, which largely characterise properties within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. Despite a limited degree of screening which would be provided by nearby greenery, due to the location of the building, the proposed side dormer would be particularly prominent in views and would unbalance the appearance of the semi-detached pair of which No 53 is part.

6. Furthermore, both of the proposed dormers would appear visually jarring in design terms; of particular concern is the disproportionate relationship between the glazed areas of the windows and their surrounds, whereby the glazed elements would appear overly small.
7. Consequently, the proposed dormer windows would appear as unsympathetic additions which, cumulatively, would unacceptably dominate the roof of the host dwelling and would detract from the character and appearance of the building and the wider conservation area.
8. Whilst the appellant makes reference to the existence of a number of other dormer windows which could be considered similar, each case must be determined on its individual merits and the circumstances in each case are likely to be different. For example, a number of the examples cited are situated on buildings which are less prominent within the street scene, many examples feature only rear dormers and the majority are of a different design to that proposed in this instance. Furthermore, the evidence before me suggests that some of the other dormers were determined within a different context, perhaps prior to the designation of the conservation area. Moreover, in light of the harm I have outlined above, the existence of other examples is not justification in itself for the grant of planning permission.
9. In addition to the requirement under section 72 of The Act, the CA is also a designated heritage asset as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
10. In this case due to the small scale of the proposal the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. Paragraph 196 of 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. In this instance, on the basis of the evidence before me, I do not consider that there would be public benefits which would be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have outlined above.
11. The proposed dormers would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the host property and the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area, contrary to policies Q2, Q5 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan, September 2015 (LP). These policies, amongst other things, state that development will be supported if visual amenity is not unacceptably compromised and seeks alterations to buildings which positively respond to the original architecture of the host building and locality. The proposal would also be at odds with LP Policy Q22 which seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.

12. The proposal would also fail to conform with guidance set out within the Council's Building Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document, September 2015 (SPG). The SPG sets out guidance for the design of dormers and states that the introduction of new dormers requires a careful approach to ensure compatibility with the main building and their wider context.

Other Matters

13. I have noted a number of other issues raised, including the effect on the living conditions of other nearby residents. However, as this proposal is going to be dismissed for other reasons and the other concerns expressed do not have a direct bearing on the main issue, it is not necessary for these to be explored further as part of this appeal.
14. I also note the appellant's representations regarding the process surrounding the designation of the conservation area. However, the merits of the area and its designation are not within the scope of the appeal before me.

Conclusion

15. The proposal would not accord with the development plan when it is considered as a whole and I have not identified any material considerations which indicate that the appeal should be allowed. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L J O'Brien

INSPECTOR

