The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 29 July 2021 by B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI

Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3272148
18 Eastbourne Road, Chiswick, W4 3EB

- 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 Mrs. Juliet Mearza against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
- The application Ref 00381/18/P4, dated 14 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 March 2021.
- The development proposed is described as "Erection of an extension on both sides of the roof and two front roof windows"

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description in the header above is taken from the Council's decision notice and has been agreed by the appellant. However, the submitted roof and floor plans show six rooflights are proposed, not two, but four of these were not shown on the elevation drawings before the Council. To address this the appellant has submitted corrected elevations as part of this appeal, which the Council has been given the opportunity to comment on. As the total number of proposed rooflights is clearly shown on other plans I am satisfied that these amended plans correct an error and do not materially alter the proposal from that which was considered by the Council. As such, no party would be prejudiced by my accepting them. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans, including the corrected elevations.

4. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). Accordingly, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the publication. Any comments received have been addressed within the appeal decision.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing property, the street scene and the Chiswick House Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The CA primarily derives significance from the Grade I listed Chiswick House and its gardens, but also includes surrounding late 19th and early 20th century residential areas and open spaces. While of secondary interest to Chiswick House, these residential areas were included to protect views of the listed building and because of the high quality of their design and their response to the House and gardens. As such, they also make an important contribution to the significance of the CA. The Chiswick House Conservation Area Appraisal (2021) (CAA) identifies several threats to the CA, including demand for enlargements, especially roof extensions, and a creeping loss of architectural integrity.

7. The appeal property is a large, detached, brick built 1930's dwelling located on a suburban residential street characterised by traditional dwellings. Most are arranged in pairs and are of similar character but with some variety in design. Many have been extended in various ways, however Eastbourne Road is identified in the CAA as not having been particularly affected by unsympathetic alterations, with each house having individual features that make up the overall appearance of the area. Therefore, while it is towards the edge of the CA this road, and the houses within it, contribute positively to its significance.

8. No 18 is one of only a few detached dwellings in the road and is different in design to any other property, with its central gable and pyramidal roof forming distinctive features in the street scene. Whilst its frontage is not entirely symmetrical, it has a simple architectural form which appears relatively unaltered. The brick lintels and date inscription on the central gable contribute to the high-quality appearance of the dwelling, which, whilst not formally identified as a character building in the CAA, nonetheless contributes positively to the character and appearance of the street scene and wider CA.

9. The two proposed dormers, set either side of the roof, would result in bulky additions which would visually compete with the existing simple frontage and prominent gable. The set in from the side and set down from the ridge would comply with the general guidelines within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extension Guidelines (2017) (SPD). However, their mansard-style roof form, with a combination of flat and pitched roofs would not respect the profile of the original roof or be in keeping with the style of the host building. As such, the proposed dormers would appear out of keeping with the proportions and design of the existing dwelling and would detract from its distinctive features.

10. The proposed dormers would be visible when approaching the dwelling from either direction along Eastbourne Road, from where their unsympathetic roof forms would be clearly apparent. As such, they would appear as a dominant and intrusive form of development which would harm the character and appearance of the street scene.

11. There are examples of side dormers on properties on Eastbourne Road both within and outside of the CA, for example at Nos 4, 12 and 14. However, these are single dormers on semi-detached dwellings which have a different roof form to No 18. Furthermore, many have half-hipped roofs which reflect the roof form of their host properties. Consequently, they do not have the same visual impact on the host property nor street scene as two separate dormers either side of a gable on a detached house. A number of rear dormers are visible from

the rear of the appeal property, however these have a limited visual impact given their siting. Therefore, none of these examples have a comparable impact on the character and appearance of their host properties, the street scene or the CA to that which the appeal scheme would have, and do not justify the proposal before me.

12. Consequently, the proposal would diminish the architectural integrity of the host dwelling and the high quality of design in this residential street. As such, it would detract from features which contribute to the significance of the CA, and would not preserve or enhance its appearance.

13. Given the limited scale of development, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA as a whole. Nonetheless, having regard to the Framework, this is a matter of considerable weight and importance, which must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The extension would provide private benefits for the occupants, and no public benefits have been identified. Therefore, there are none which would outweigh the harm to the CA.

14. Rooflights are relatively common in the area and subject to use of suitable materials and detailed design, they would not harm the character and appearance of the property, street scene or CA. Nevertheless, this does not justify the harm from the proposed dormers.

15. Accordingly, the proposed dormers would harm the character and appearance of the existing property and street scene and the appearance of the Chiswick House CA. They would therefore conflict with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 Volume One, which collectively promote high quality design which conserves and takes opportunities to enhance the special qualities and heritage of the area.

16. They would therefore also conflict with the character aims of the SPD and the heritage policies of the Framework, which require great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. There are no material considerations, including the benefits of the proposal and the Framework, that indicate the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore recommend that the appeal should not succeed.

B Phillips

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR