



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 14 September 2021

by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/W/21/3268127

23 Chesterton Road, London W10 5LY

- 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 Frith against the decision of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
 - The application Ref PP/20/05766, dated 19 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 23 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is an additional mansard floor to top floor flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and area, having regard to the location within the Oxford Gardens–St Quinton Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

3. The CA covers quite an extensive urban area which includes sections with a regular pattern of streets with terrace properties that evolved from the mid-Victorian period. In the vicinity of the appeal site, the streets often have a consistent appearance with a regular pattern of sash windows and architectural detailing including being faced with stucco detailing and/or brick. The significance of this part of the CA results from these groups of buildings with their locally distinctive and original features that combine to form attractive streets scenes.
4. 23 Chesterton Road is an pleasantly proportioned, well-articulated and attractive Victorian building. It has stucco and brick elevations and a roof set behind a parapet with chimneys. The building is located in a prominent position at the road intersection and is framed by the surrounding buildings in some mid-distance views, particularly when viewed from Chesterton Road to the broadly north east and from St Lawrence Terrace to the broadly north. No 23 and the buildings in the surrounding terraces are all identified in the Oxford Gardens–St Quinton Conservation Area Appraisal as buildings which make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the CA.
5. The proposal would add a further floor to the roof of the building. The addition to the roof would be set back from the edge of the parapets a reasonable distance. Nevertheless, parts of the roof extension would be clearly apparent

above the parapet in some of the important mid-distance views from the adjoining roads. The design of the extension, including with the pattern of large, glazed openings, flat roof with, it appears, limited detailing to the overhang and the overall composition, would relate poorly with the well-articulated Victorian appearance of the host building. As designed it would appear as an alien addition with few features that respected the distinctive identity of the building nor would it be sympathetic to local character. Furthermore, the roof addition would interrupt the largely consistent and unaltered roofline of the immediately adjoining properties in St Lawrence Terrace which forms a group with the appeal property.

6. Examples of many roof additions to other terrace building have been brought to my attention and I observed a range of roof additions in the area, including those in the attached terrace in Chesterton Road. In particular, the addition at 16 Bonchurch Road has been highlighted and I saw the roof extension at 20 Chesterton Road at my site visit. However, I do not consider that these are all particularly comparable examples as they often have different designs, relationships to their terraces and, in any case, some differ because they are traditional mansard roof additions with the front elevation in slate angled back from the parapet wall, unlike the appeal scheme. Some of the roof extensions do not appear sympathetic additions that it would be appropriate to seek to replicate. The presence of these other roof additions and their effect on the appearance of the area does not convince me that the appeal proposal, in the form of an addition that would be incongruous to the host building and area, should be permitted.
7. As a result of the above analysis, I consider that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building. As the building is prominent within this part of the CA the effect would be to result in harm to the character and appearance of the CA and therefore detract from the significance of this designated heritage asset. The harm to the CA as a whole would be less than substantial within the meaning of paragraph 202¹ of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). In accordance with the Framework, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
8. The benefits of the scheme would include the economic benefits from the construction works and, in particular, the provision of the enlarged accommodation and improved outlook, natural light and living conditions for the occupants of the accommodation, both now and in the longer term for future residents. This would accord with the Framework policy that decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. However, notwithstanding the importance of these matters, the public benefits, including the improvements to the quality of the accommodation, would be minor and would afford no more than of limited weight.
9. The Framework advises that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification and that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of the potential harm to the significance. I have found that the public benefits of the proposal afford limited weight and therefore would not outweigh the harm to the CA and its significance, which in accordance with the Framework, is required to be attributed great weight.

¹ The Framework was revised on 20 July 2021. However, while some of the paragraph numbers have changed the key elements of the Framework policies that are relevant to this appeal have not been materially altered.

10. In the light of the above analysis, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and area, and not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would therefore conflict with Policies CL1, CL2, CL3, CL8 and CL11 of the Kensington and Chelsea Local Plan September 2019 which requires, amongst other things, that development responds to the local context.

Conclusion

11. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan in respect of the adverse effect to the character and appearance of the host building and the area. There are no other considerations which outweigh this conflict and so I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Wyborn

INSPECTOR