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# Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 28 September 2021

**by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 01 October 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/21/3274277**

**17 Compton Crescent, Northolt UB5 5LP**

- 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 Ms Sandra Staneviciute against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
  - The application Ref 203546FUL, dated 20 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2021.
  - The development proposed is dual loft conversion, to existing and proposed dwelling houses (pertaining to planning permission 192204FUL).
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matter

2. Since the Council's decision, the London Plan 2021 (LP) has been adopted. This now forms part of the development plan for the appeal site and its policies replace those from the London Plan 2016 referred to in the Council's refusal reasons. I have invited the Council to provide copies of the new development plan policies that it considers are relevant to this appeal but none have been submitted. In their statement, the appellant mentions LP policies. As such, I am satisfied that both parties have had sufficient opportunity to provide comments on the recently adopted development plan.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

## Reasons

4. The site lies at a bend in the road so that Compton Crescent runs to the front and side of the property. Also, as there is no building directly to the rear, the back of the roof of the house is seen over the boundary fence from the highway. The area mainly consists of houses and apartment buildings.
5. The proposal would be at roof level and so it would be conspicuous from the road to the side and when approaching from the rear. The box-like form of the extension with vertical elevations and a flat roof would be markedly different to the existing pitched roof on the house and to those seen on most of the nearby properties. The appellant contends that the scheme is a common type of loft conversion but roofs in the vicinity tend to be of simple pitched form with very few high level extensions.

6. Moreover, the use of steel mirror cladding as well as the large triangular windows would be at odds with the prevalent use of roof tiles seen in the area. These proposed materials and finishes together with the unusual form of the extension would be strikingly incongruous. I am advised that steel cladding has been used as part of a scheme in a conservation area elsewhere in London. However, it does not follow that such a material would be appropriate for an extension where buildings tend to have roof tiles.
7. Reference is made to a LP policy that states innovative approaches to improve the public realm should be explored. However, the proposal would stand out as an incompatible oddity amongst the surrounding buildings of simple but pleasant form and appearance. As such, it would not enhance but it would detract from the visual qualities of the street scene. The fact that the Council has allowed high rise blocks of flats elsewhere has no bearing on my views of the appeal development.
8. For these reasons, I conclude the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. In these regards, it would not accord with policies 7B and 7.4 of the Ealing Development Management Plan Document 2013. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure extensions complement the host building and its context.

### **Other Considerations**

9. The appellant claims a fallback position in that the proposal could be lawfully constructed under the provisions of Class B of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. However, such rights are subject to a condition that any external materials used in the construction of a roof addition should be of similar appearance to those of the existing dwelling. The proposal would not accord with this clause as it would use steel cladding that is unlike the existing roof tiles. As such, I am unconvinced that permitted development rights would allow an extension as markedly out of character as the proposal. Therefore, the fallback position does not provide sufficient justification to allow the appeal.
10. The development would provide more accommodation for the existing and the approved house and so in these regards it would make a more efficient use of land. This factor attracts modest weight.

### **Conclusion**

11. The harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area means the development would be contrary to the development plan policies when read as a whole. The benefits of the scheme and other considerations are of insufficient weight to warrant a grant of planning permission contrary to the development plan. Therefore, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

*Jonathan Edwards*

INSPECTOR