



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2021

by Robin Buchanan BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3276168

150 Belgrave Road, London E11 3QR

- 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 Keith Coffey against the decision of the London Borough of Redbridge Council.
 - The application Ref 0732/21, dated 19 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the host property and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Aldersbrook and Lake House Conservation Area (the CA) and its setting.

Reasons

3. The host property is an end of terrace two-storey house with a fully hipped roof and chimney stacks. It faces Belgrave Road in the CA and beyond the rear garden a public path runs alongside the boundary of the CA next to a park. The significance of the CA derives, in part, from blocks of terraced Edwardian houses with hipped roofs and chimney stacks arranged in regimented street patterns which affords distinctive streetscene views. The host property therefore contributes meaningfully to the significance of the CA.
4. The proposal would alter and extend the side elevation of the roof from a full hip to a half-hip above a narrow gable with two conventional rooflights in the front roof slope and an unusual small rooflight in the half-hipped side roof slope. A loft room would be created in the rear roof slope (replacing a rooflight) and a chimney stack removed.
5. Some end of terrace houses in Belgrave Road (and similar houses in this part of the CA nearby in Richmond Way and Lake House Road) appear to have been originally built with full gable roofs or more recently altered from a full hip to a full gable form. These houses are mostly located either side of the narrow gaps between the opposing ends of blocks of terraces arranged in straight rows, with a similar set back and building line. As a result, these gable roofs are not very obvious in the streetscene unless viewed from directly opposite.

6. In contrast, the appeal property is on the outside edge of a tight bend in the road such that the alignment of the two adjoining terraced blocks of houses is at an angle to each other. At the front the appeal property is sited much further forward than the opposing end of terrace house at No 152 Belgrave Road and at the rear, the opening of the angle between the two houses creates a larger gap. As a result, the front elevation, and a substantial part of the side elevation of the host property, including the hipped roof and the rear chimney stack, is more pronounced in the Belgrave Road streetscene, while the hipped roof is more clearly apparent from the rear.
7. The proposed half-hipped roof would not be a full hip or a full gable. It would, therefore, jar with the intrinsic roof form of the host property and be manifestly out of keeping with the prevailing roof form of these nearby houses. Furthermore, despite the pavement tree, which is directly in front of the host property, a significant part of the proposed half-hip roof, including the anomalous side facing rooflight, would be unduly conspicuous in short and longer distance public views from Belgrave Road to the south east and towards the corner with Lake House Road. Moreover, the rear chimney stack would be conspicuous by its absence and a notable loss of a distinctive feature in the streetscene. This part of the proposal (including the chimney removal) would also be apparent in public views from the path. It would therefore unduly undermine the significance of this part of the CA and of the CA overall.
8. I have been referred to the roof alterations to No 87 Belgrave Road. Even if these works were granted planning permission before the CA was extended to include Belgrave Road, it appears that the development permitted by the Council was intended to broadly reflect the overall similar design and appearance of the opposing house on the other corner at the junction of Belgrave Road with Richmond Way. I have also been referred to some houses with side half-hipped roofs in Windsor Road. However, these houses are visually and spatially separated from the host property and it is, in any event, not a common roof form in Belgrave Road. These examples can therefore be distinguished from the circumstances of the current appeal.
9. The front rooflights would be different sizes and widely spaced, with one near the apex of the projecting bay and the other next to the raised party wall. However, both would be aligned horizontally at the top. Moreover, many houses in Belgrave Road, and in the nearby roads, have front facing rooflights, including more than two or placed in a more haphazard arrangement.
10. The rear loft room would be reasonably large and occupy a significant proportion of the rear roof slope, even as extended to one side. The dormer style design would have a flat roof with a window and a Juliette balcony. Due to the increased massing of the half-hipped roof, it would not be seen in any meaningful public view from Belgrave Road, though it would be observed from the path. However, many houses in this road which back onto the path (and albeit including mid-terraced houses) have rear loft roof rooms of a similar size, siting, design and appearance to the appeal proposal, including Juliette balconies.
11. While the proposal would perpetuate front rooflights and rear loft rooms in the CA, these parts of the proposal would be assimilated into the overall form of the host property and would not, therefore, appear unduly discordant. Furthermore, such interventions into the fabric and structure of nearby houses

are not uncharacteristic in this part of the CA. Subject to a suitable condition to approve details and materials of conservation rooflights and of the loft room, I am satisfied that these parts of the proposal would be acceptable. Nonetheless, these aspects do not overcome the fundamental incompatibility in the shape and detail of the proposed half-hip alteration and extension of the main roof and removal of the chimney stack.

12. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the rooflights and loft room would have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the CA and that the loft room would have a neutral effect on the setting of the CA. However, the half-hip roof and associated alterations and extension, including the loss of a chimney stack, would have an unacceptable negative effect on the character and appearance of a small part of the CA and its setting. It would therefore cause less than substantial harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset, which would not be outweighed by any public benefit in this case, and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
13. Consequently, the proposal would not comply with Policies LP26, LP30 or LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan, March 2018. These policies include that household extensions should complement the character of a building in style, form and orientation, maintain or improve the appearance of the locality and streetscene and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or its setting. It would also not comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which gives great weight to the conservation of heritage assets and requires clear and convincing justification for any harm.

Other Matters

14. I acknowledge that one chimney stack would be retained, that the host property is not a listed building and that the CA was relatively recently extended to include Belgrave Road. The appeal property is well-located to public transport and there would be no change to means of access, nor were any other 'amenity' objections been raised by the Council. The works would be carried out in accordance with Building Regulations and would be energy efficient. The absence of harm, and compliance with the Council's development plan and the Framework, in these regards are neutral factors in my decision.
15. I also appreciate that the proposal is a revised scheme, further to the Council's refusal of a previous scheme, and that the appellant considers that it overcomes the Council's previous reasons for refusal. However, I have determined the appeal on its individual planning merits.

Conclusion

16. The proposed development would not accord with the development plan overall. There are no other material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding.
17. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Robin Buchanan

INSPECTOR