
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 26 October 2021 by Max Webb

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3279664

16 Woodlands Avenue, Wanstead, London E11 3QZ

- 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 Jane Williams against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1631/21, dated 15 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with a rear dormer incorporating a Juliet balcony and three front roof lights.
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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.

Procedural Matters

3. The description used in the banner heading has been taken from the Council's Decision Notice as it provides a more accurate description of the proposed development than that which was given on the application form.
4. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I have had regard to this as a material consideration however, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The issues most relevant to this appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Aldersbrook Conservation Area and Lake House Estate.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site is located in the Aldersbrook Conservation Area and Lake House Estate (CA). The significance of the CA is derived from the range of Edwardian

style dwellings and their traditional features. The Aldersbrook Conservation Area and Lake House Estate Design Guide (2020) (Design Guide) outlines that, as recent alterations have eroded some of the important characteristics of the CA, protecting the remaining traditional features is of particular importance. The appeal dwelling contributes to the character of the CA through its traditional Edwardian style, including pitched roofs and fenestration. There is a path to the rear of the appeal site that borders Wanstead Park, allowing substantial views of the rear of the dwelling. This means that both the front and rear elevations of the appeal dwelling provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.

7. The proposal would install a box dormer with a Juliet balcony on the rear roof slope of the host dwelling. The flat roof of the dormer would disrupt the traditional pitched roof of the property. The inclusion of a Juliet balcony would result in the proposed dormer failing to respect the relatively symmetrical fenestration of the host dwelling. Furthermore, Juliet balconies are not common in the vicinity of the appeal site, and it would appear out of keeping with the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposed dormer would not preserve the character of the CA, and the use of matching materials would not alter this.
8. The Design Guide presents guidelines for the positioning and scale of box dormers, which the proposal may follow, however it does not suggest box dormers will be an appropriate addition in all contexts. Whilst pitched roof dormers may have been considered by the appellant, this does not change the fact that the proposed flat roofed dormer would not be an appropriate addition in this context.
9. Substantial vegetation prevents views of the site from within Wanstead Park. However, the footpath bordering the park that runs directly to the rear of the appeal site means that the proposal would be publicly visible, and therefore the views where the harm to the character of the CA would be seen, are beyond private views only. Furthermore, although there are a number of box dormers on properties on the opposing side of the appeal street, these are in much less publicly visible locations. In any case, despite the presence of a number of other box dormers on both sides of the appeal street, they are not so prevalent that they form the primary character of the area, with pitched roofs still the predominant roof form through which the CA derives its significance.
10. The proposal would also install three rooflights on the front roof slope. The positioning of these would fail to respect the traditional fenestration seen on this part of the dwelling. Although the front gable feature would somewhat disrupt the visibility of two of the rooflights, they would still be visible from the front of the property. The use of conservation grade rooflights would slightly diminish their harm, and there are a number of other rooflights in the area. However, front rooflights do not form the predominant character of the area and the significance of the CA is derived from the traditional fenestration. The proposed rooflights would disrupt the fenestration and would therefore not preserve the character of the area.
11. As the development would only be seen from a small section of the CA, there would be less than substantial harm to the heritage asset. In such circumstances, Paragraph 202 of the Framework requires that the harm is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. It is understood that the proposal would provide accommodation for a growing family, however this is a

private benefit to the appellant. Even if considered a public benefit by creating a family home, this relates to a single dwelling and would have minimal effect on the national shortage of family homes. It would thus not outweigh the harm caused by the development to the heritage asset.

12. Overall, the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would therefore be contrary to Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 (adopted 2018), which together aim to ensure development conserves or enhances the character and significance of heritage assets. It would also conflict with Policy HC1 of the London Plan (adopted 2021) which looks to prevent development that would not conserve the significance of heritage assets. Likewise, it would go against the aims of the Design Guide, which seeks to ensure the survival of historic features in the CA, including the retention of pitched roofs.

Other Matters

13. The suggestion that the Council did not quantify the level of harm or conduct a planning balance does not alter the substantial planning matters considered in this appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to the Development Plan as a whole, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Max Webb

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Taylor

INSPECTOR