



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 24 November 2021

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/21/3273823

91 – 93 Deodar Road, London SW15 2NU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Conor Davis against the decision of London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2021/0564, dated 4 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 April 2021.
 - The application sought planning permission for alterations to two properties for changes to internal layout and facade amendments. Including: erection of a mansard roof extension to main rear roof slope of 93 (with French doors and safety railing), raising the ridge by 890mm. Formation of a roof terrace with opaque glass screen 1.7mm above rear addition without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 2020/3961, dated 14 December 2020.
 - The condition in dispute is No 2 which states that: The development shall be carried out in accordance with the reports, specifications and drawings detailed [DRC_40, DRC_41, DRC_30, DRC_35, DRC_27, DRC_26, DRC_25, DRC_24, DRC_23, DRC_22].
 - The reason given for the condition is: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development and to allow the local planning authority to review any potential changes to the scheme.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Preliminary Matters

2. The Council granted planning permission on 14 December 2020 for alterations to Nos. 91 and 93 Deodar Road¹ for various works to the internal layout and the elevations of the properties including a mansard roof to the rear of the main roof of No 93, raising the ridge of No 93 to match No 91 and the formation of a roof terrace. In addition, this permission provides for the conversion of the two properties into a single dwelling house.
3. An application to vary condition no. 2 was refused by the Council. This is now subject of this appeal. The planning application form states that 'we would like to combine the two existing front entrance doors into one'. This was the basis on which the Council consulted and determined the proposal. This is confirmed by the description of development on the appellant's appeal form. I note that a further application² has been refused by the Council which seems to relate to the front boundary wall and central hedge. As such, despite the appellant's statement referring to the removal of small sections of the front boundary wall and the parking areas of both properties, I have determined the appeal based

¹ Council Ref: 2020/3961

² Council Ref: 2021/0706

solely on the change proposed to the two entrance doors.

4. Although only No 91 is referred to on the planning application form, the planning permission granted and the scheme before me relates to Nos 91 and 93. I have, for completeness included No 93 in the address.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the proposed replacement of two entrance doors with a single centralised door with fixed side panels would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Deodar Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The Deodar Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy ('the Appraisal') states that the special character of the conservation area is derived from the riverfront setting of its houses and the close architectural similarity of the majority of these buildings. The location of the houses with their long back gardens backing onto the river is unique in Wandsworth. The houses are superficially similar to other housing stock in the borough but they are the only houses in the borough to enjoy this relationship with the Thames.
7. Houses on the north side of Deodar Road generally have a character and appearance of semi-detached pairs though they are either linked or separated by narrow gaps. They have a varied appearance despite their similar scale, design and proportion. The houses were built in a loose Old English architectural style typical of the late Victorian period with some early Edwardian elements. The houses are three stories high and set back from the road which creates a suburban feel.
8. Alterations to houses on the road include the amalgamation of twin doorways into one, but this change is not common. In any event the houses still make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a result of their age and the overall cohesiveness of their design which still influences a strong sense of unity that derives from the construction by a single firm of developers, in a similar size and in a similar time period.
9. Notwithstanding the planning permission granted, Nos 91 and 93 retain the appearance of a semi-detached pair due to the symmetrical features that include front bay windows and entrance doors with adjoining halls and pitched roof porches over. Two entrance doors are a characteristic feature in the front elevations of the linked semi-detached pairings. As such Nos 91 and 93 positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
10. A single entrance door would erode the character and appearance of Nos 91 and 93 with the effect clear from the road. A single entrance door would not visually harmonise with the overall cohesiveness of the houses on the north side of the road. I understand that if two entrance doors are retained one may be permanently fixed shut, but the proposal would not preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area.
11. I saw the single central door serving 95 to 97 Deodar Road where two doors once occupied this part of the front elevation. Planning permission was granted by the Council in 2006 for this change. Points are made about the development plan policies then and now, but Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') has not changed. Therefore, the

entrance door at Nos 95 and 97 is relevant to this case, but while the Council reached the decision that it did, I do not consider Nos 95 to 97 to justify the further erosion of the conservation areas special character when restoration, reinstatement and enhancement is what the Appraisal calls for. Policy HC1 of The London Plan (LP) also says that the cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed.

12. In my view the proposal would result in less than substantial harm in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). This harm still however carries great weight. A single entrance door may better serve the approved ground floor internal layout and the occupants of the dwelling, but this is a private benefit. There are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the property and the conservation area.
13. I conclude that the proposed replacement of two entrance doors with a single centralised door with fixed side panels would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Deodar Conservation Area. The proposal would be contrary to Section 72 of the Act, Policies DMS1 and DMS2 of the Development Management Policies Document, LP Policy HC1 and Framework paragraph 202. Jointly these seek the conservation of features and elements that contribute to the heritage asset's significance and character such as doors to ensure a high level of physical integration with their surroundings and to preserve or enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of heritage assets.

Other Matter

14. I agree with the Council that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents or result in highways or transport issues, but these matters do not alter or outweigh my finding on the main issue.

Conclusion

15. The proposal would conflict with the Development Plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that I should take a different decision other than in accordance with this.
16. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR