



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2021

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3280011

28 Hereford Road, Wanstead, London, E11 2EA

- 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 Elizabeth Lancaster against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2357/21, dated 2 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with a dormer to the rear and side roof slope, two Velux roof lights to the front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a 2 storey semi-detached Edwardian era house in the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area (CA). Most pairs of houses have relatively narrow gaps between them and have identical features which together with their symmetrical appearance contribute to the character and appearance of the CA. These features include 2 storey bays with prominent pitched roof gable ends clad with wooden boards in a distinctive pattern. Barge boards on the bay gables are patterned and there are finials and crested ridge tiles on the bay, and main, roofs. The gable ends of houses have large chimneys built into them. All the above features draw attention to the roofscape which in this part of the CA, on similarly designed houses, is relatively unaltered.
4. The proposed development is for a loft conversion and comprises a rear roof dormer, roof lights on the front roof slope, and a side dormer. According to the Council, the proposal is similar to one already approved at the appeal site, but which did not include the side dormer which the Council considers to be inappropriate.
5. Most houses in the street have pitched roofs with parapet walls above their gable ends. The gable ends and roof ridges are close between neighbouring pairs of semi-detached houses. The appeal property and adjoining house have hipped roofs which provide a larger gap between their roof ridges and those of

neighbouring houses. The hipped roofs are angled away from the side chimneys, rather than the chimneys being built into the gable end of the roof, as is the case with most other houses. As a result, the chimneys are more exposed and prominent on the appeal property and adjoining neighbour, and more sky is visible between their roofs and those of houses to the side of them. The roof profiles, prominence of the side chimneys, and open gap between neighbouring roof ridges contribute to the character and appearance of the host house and its adjoining neighbour.

6. During my site visit I saw no side dormers on similarly designed houses within Hereford Road or nearby roads within the CA. Despite its modest size and hipped roof, the proposed dormer would alter the roof profile, fill the gap between the existing hipped roof and chimney, and reduce the gap with the roof of No 26. I accept that the proposed development would only be visible opposite the appeal site, and No 26, because the narrow gap between the 2 houses and the projecting bay roof on the host house obstruct longer views. Nonetheless, it would upset the symmetry that currently exists between the host property and adjoining house and the features that I have identified as contributing to their character and appearance. It would also interrupt the uniformity of unaltered roofs on similar houses within the wider CA. As such it would harm the character and appearance of the building and wider area.
7. The appellant has provided examples of side dormers permitted on houses in nearby Rutland Road and hip to gable extensions within Hereford Road, the latter being very different to that which is proposed. The houses referred to in Rutland Road postdate the appeal property and are different in terms of their design. They lack the features that I have identified as distinct to the roofscape around the appeal site, which draw attention to it and contribute to the character of the area. Furthermore, I saw several examples of side extensions, in addition to side dormers and other alterations on properties within Rutland Road. As a result, the road lacks the uniformity of design, and the relatively unaltered state, that is characteristic of houses in Hereford Road. I do not therefore consider that the examples given by the appellant are directly comparable to the proposal, nor do they alter my view that the proposed development would harm the appearance of the host property.
8. Given the small scale of the development within the context of the CA as a whole, the harm would be localised, limited and less than substantial but would nevertheless conflict with Policies LP26, LP30, and L33 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018) and Policy HC1 of The London Plan (2021) which require development to be well designed and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
9. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires justification and, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), I must weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. Although no public benefits have been put forward by the appellant, there would be modest benefits arising from short term employment during its construction. However, such benefits would not outweigh the harm to the appearance of the building and the CA that I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR