



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2022

by R Morgan BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/D/21/3274796

27 Lansdowne Road, LONDON, W11 3AG

- 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 I Paley against the decision of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
 - The application Ref PP/20/04167, dated 29 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 30 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the Council made its decision, a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been issued. As no significant changes have been made to provisions concerning the protection of the historic environment, I am satisfied that the revisions do not prejudice the case of either party.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ladbroke Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Ladbroke Conservation Area (LCA) is characterised by streets, crescents and avenues of grand residences which date from the mid nineteenth century. The style of the buildings is distinctive to the area, generally being half or fully stuccoed with elaborate detailing. Most are terraces but there also examples of semi-detached villas and triplets, which are identified within the LCA Appraisal as being of key special interest to the area. The buildings are interspersed with large communal gardens which are accessed directly from them, resulting in a green and spacious urban form. The significance of the LCA is derived in part from the quality of the buildings, many of which are listed, and their relationship with the landscaped areas between.
5. The appeal property forms the end house of an asymmetrical triplet, and is located on a prominent position at the corner of Lansdowne Road and St John's Gardens. The houses back directly onto a communal Registered Historic Park and Garden (Grade II listed). The three properties which make up the triplet are notably different, but reflect the style of the surrounding buildings, with

stucco detailing and prominent balustrades. A particular feature of the appeal property is its elegant side elevation fronting onto St John's Gardens, on which the main entrance to the house is located. Such examples of well-designed terrace ends are identified within the LCA Appraisal as distinctive and important features of the conservation area.

6. Despite various alterations over the years, some of which have not been particularly sensitive to the original building, the appeal property and wider terrace contribute positively to the character and appearance of the LCA.
7. Unlike many of the surrounding properties, which appear to have flat roofs behind parapets, the appeal terrace has extensions at roof level, notably the additional storey at 25 Lansdowne Road (No. 25), which occupies a central position in the triplet. Much less obvious is the existing pitched roof addition at 27 Lansdowne Road (No. 27), which has a glazed apex facing the side elevation to St John's Gardens. Whilst neither are particularly characteristic of the area, the shallow pitched form of the roof extension at No. 27, and its position set back from all sides of the roof, means that it from many vantage points it is scarcely visible, and where it can be seen, is not particularly noticeable or obtrusive.
8. The proposed mansard style extension would be similar in overall height to the existing pitched roof element, but owing to its steeply sided form, would have greater bulk. As a result, and despite being well set back from the roof edge, the proposed extension would be notably more visible from the street than the existing pitched roof addition, even if that feature were to be extended as allowed under application ref PP/21/00499.
9. The design of the proposed extension is more sensitive to that previously dismissed at appeal (ref APP/K5600/W/19/3236615). The additional set back would reduce the prominence, and the retention of the chimneys, which are a distinctive feature of the roof, would help to retain the historic character of the building. The proposal would continue an established history of change to the property, but unlike in the existing situation, the proposal would clearly read as an additional storey at roof level. The proposal would fail to reflect the prevailing character of the area, in which the roofs behind parapets generally appear to be flat, with chimneys the only readily visible features.
10. The proposed extension would be partially screened by the parapet, and from some vantage points the chimneys and street trees would also provide screening. Despite this, the proposal would be clearly visible from the street, in particular from Lansdowne Road to the north and from St John's Gardens to the east, where it would be seen in the context of the two primary elevations.
11. The existing triplet has considerable variation, but the roofline of the terrace, which is dominated by the central extension at No. 25, appears broadly symmetrical. Although the proposed extension would be viewed against the backdrop of the extension at No. 25 and would retain the existing subservience, it would have the effect of significantly altering the appearance of the roof and unbalancing the existing symmetry at roof level.
12. The proposed alteration to the roofline in this sensitive and prominent location would cause harm to the host property and the wider terrace. Given its positive contribution to the wider LCA, it would also cause harm to the designated heritage asset.

13. With regard to paragraph 202 of the Framework, the harm to the LCA would be less than substantial. However, Framework paragraph 199 requires that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the level of harm.
14. The Framework requires that harm to the conservation area should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed extension would provide additional living space, but this would be a private benefit, and the building could still function as a high quality, single family residence without the proposed extension. The chimneys are already there and could be repaired without the proposed development.
15. In the absence of any public benefit to outweigh the harm identified above, I conclude that the works would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ladbroke CA. It would conflict with Policy CL3 of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Local Plan 2019, which aims to preserve or enhance heritage assets. There would be further conflict with Policies CL1 and CL2 of the same plan, which require new development to be of the highest architectural quality, contribute positively to townscape and respond to local context. The proposal also fails to comply with the requirements in Policies CL6, CL8 and CL9, that extensions and roof alterations be architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building.
16. The property is adjacent to a view along St John's Gardens which is identified as being important within the LCA Character Appraisal. Whilst the proposal would be visible from the street, it would not interrupt or appreciably detract from the important view, so would not conflict with Local Plan Policy CL11.

Conclusion

17. The proposal fails to comply with the development plan and the relevant provisions of the Framework. No other material considerations outweigh this finding. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

R Morgan

INSPECTOR