



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2022

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/21/3278547

18 Wolverton Gardens, Flat 5, Ealing W5 3LJ

- 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 Hans Anand against the decision of London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 210143FUL, dated 14 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is extension of the attic creating a pitched roof over the existing side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's reason for refusal refers to the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). After the decision, on 20 July 2021, the Government published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The appeal timetable has allowed both parties the opportunity to make comments relating to the updated Framework.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing building, and whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Creffield Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. 18 Wolverton Gardens lies in the Creffield Conservation Area (the CA). The significance of this heritage asset lies in its late 19th and early 20th century origins, as a planned residential estate of architecturally superior houses. Its predominant character is created by buildings with fine detailing, set back from the road behind front gardens, providing a tranquil suburban atmosphere that contrasts with the busy transport routes around its perimeter.
5. Wolverton Gardens comprises two opposing rows of grand, and ornate houses, largely in symmetrical semi-detached pairs. Whilst there is considerable variety in the detailing of the individual houses, there is a general uniformity in their alignment, two-storey scale, and high-quality architecture. Regularly spaced, and highly decorative front gables, provide articulation to the front facades of the houses, and give a distinctive rhythm to the street scene. The main roofscape also shows a high degree of consistency, with each pair of semi-

detached houses having a common hipped roof, resulting in regular spaces between the pairs of buildings above eaves level.

6. The appeal building is detached, and has an uncharacteristic flat-roofed two-storey side extension. But, as this addition has been detailed to match the main building, with brick arches over the windows and a parapeted roof, it does not have a significant impact on the overall character of the building. It also has a single gable to one side, so lacks the symmetry of the semi-detached pairs. However, the gable is decorative, with ornate barge boards, and the building also has other features that are characteristic of the high-quality architecture of the CA, including elaborate detailing around the windows and in the bands at ground and first floor ceiling levels. It has a hipped roof, and conforms with the general form, pattern, and scale of the other buildings in the street. Consequently, it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the CA.
7. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
8. The proposal involves enlarging the roof, by extending it over the flat-roofed side extension, and adding three dormers, to increase the living space in the second floor flat. It is contended that incorporating the flat-roofed element under a pitched roof would achieve a more coherent building. However, the submitted scheme would result in a complicated roof arrangement, with a stepped ridge, resulting in the front roof slope being on two different planes with a narrow slope and a valley between them. Furthermore, the hipped end of the roof would accommodate one of the proposed dormers, which would, itself, also have a hipped roof. Consequently, notwithstanding that matching materials could be used, when viewed from the front, there would be a multiplicity of roof slopes, valleys, gutters and flashing that would be out of character with the balanced and elegant architecture of the existing building and its surroundings.
9. The CA Appraisal (March 2007) identifies overlarge dormers as one of the key issues that harms the special character of buildings within the heritage asset. The CA Management Plan (March 2007) says that dormer windows will usually be acceptable on rear roof slopes, but only rarely on the front or the side, and they should not dominate the roof slope. In this case, the dormer on the side elevation would almost entirely fill the hipped roof slope from eaves to ridge. It would not, therefore be a subservient addition. Being close to the front elevation of the building, it would be a highly visible and incongruous feature in the street scene. Furthermore, it would occupy the characteristic space above eaves level between the hipped roofs of the buildings, which would harm the rhythm of the street scene and the appearance of the CA.
10. The proposals would not result in the building being out of scale with the surrounding dwellings, and the rear dormers would not be prominent from public viewpoints within the CA. However, the complicated roof configuration, and the dominant side dormer, would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of this part of the CA. I therefore conclude that the development would be harmful to the significance of the heritage asset.
11. The harm that I have identified would be limited to a relatively small part of the CA, so would be less than substantial for the purposes of paragraph 199 of the

Framework. Nevertheless, paragraphs 199 and 200 state that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets, and that any harm to, or loss of, their significance should require clear and convincing justification.

12. Paragraph 202 requires that, where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development. In this regard, there would be some economic benefit arising from the development, in the form of employment through the construction phase. However, this would be small in scale and relatively short in duration, so attracts limited weight. Consequently, it does not outweigh the great weight that the Framework gives to the conservation of heritage assets.
13. In summary, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the CA, which is not outweighed by public benefits. The development would, therefore, be contrary to Policies HC1, D3 and D4 of The London Plan (2021), and Policies 7.4 and 7B of Ealing's Development Management Development Plan Document (2013). Taken together, these policies seek to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and to ensure high-quality design that is responsive to the context of the site. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework's aim of conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Conclusion

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

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR