



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 March 2022

by Katherine Robbie BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3285640

4 and 5 Willowdene, View Road, Highgate, London N6 4DE

- 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 Butterworth & Olins against the decision of London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2021/1792, dated 27 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Proposed mansard roof extensions to adjoining properties'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwellings and the Highgate Conservation Area (HCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal properties are a pair of linked detached houses on Willowdene, a 'U' shaped development of 10 houses set around a communal garden at the junction of View Road with Denewood Road. The houses on Willowdene are uniform in design with only minor detailing differences. The houses are linked via a portico feature facing the communal garden. Each house has a separate dual-end hipped roof with a raised parapet surround. The proposal would add mansard roofs with projecting dormers both front and rear to two adjacent properties.
4. The appeal site is located in a predominantly residential area where the properties generally are large, two-storey detached period houses set in substantial grounds. Willowdene and neighbouring View Close are smaller, more modern houses set on small plots, which nevertheless contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. Notably, the uniformity and rhythm of the roofs of the houses on Willowdene contribute to a pleasing visual street scene and to the cohesive design of the development as a whole.
5. Whilst the extensions would not raise the overall height of the respective roofs to any great extent the mansard structures would add substantial bulk to the roof structure effectively making them three-storey. The effect of this would be to make the houses appear top heavy and out of keeping with their surroundings. As a result, the proposal would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of both the appeal properties themselves and the

- street scene, particularly when approaching View Road from Denewood Road and also from within the communal gardens.
6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the HCA. In considering the effect of the proposal on the HCA's setting the impact must be weighed against the harm it would have to the heritage asset.
 7. The significance of the HCA is derived from its historical pattern of development, its high percentage of buildings of architectural merit, its topography, green space and distant views. Although not period properties, the houses on Willowdene make a positive contribution to the area due to their cohesive layout and design. Their shallow hipped roofs create a sense of rhythm in the street scene, which overall contributes positively to the HCA.
 8. Furthermore, on my site visit I did not observe any other mansard roofs in the vicinity of the appeal site which would persuade me that the introduction of such a feature would be an acceptable addition to this part of the HCA. The appeal proposal would therefore introduce a form of development which is at odds with the prevailing character of development, disrupt the rhythm of the roofscapes and would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the HCA. The harm to the character and appearance of the HCA would be less than substantial, as set out in paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework').
 9. This paragraph states that where the harm is less than substantial, such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Whilst the ability to work from home due to the pandemic would comprise a very limited public benefit, the overall benefits of the proposal would be private in providing additional accommodation for the appellants and their families.
 10. Consequently, I find that the proposed extensions would adversely affect the character and appearance of the appeal properties. The proposal would also harm the character and appearance of the HCA and whilst there are public benefits arising from the proposal they are limited and would not outweigh the harm that I have identified. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan (2017), Policies DM1 and DM9 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) which together seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and ensures that those which affect heritage assets, and their settings conserve their significance. Furthermore, Policy DH5 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017) specifically requires roof extensions to respect the existing roof form of the host building.

Other Matters

11. Concern has been raised that greater visual harm would arise if one of the roof extensions were to be carried out without the other. I do agree that the harm would be greater if this were to occur and only goes to re-affirm my conclusion in respect of the proposal before me. As I am dismissing the scheme, I have not considered this matter further.

12. I note that the Highgate Society and the Highgate Neighbourhood Forum did not object to the proposal. However, a lack of such objections is a neutral matter and does not weigh in the proposals favour.
13. Other examples of mansard roof extensions nearby have been referenced by the appellant. However, I have little information on these. Therefore, I cannot be certain that there are any direct comparisons between these and the proposal before me that would weigh in its favour. In any event, I must consider the appeal on its own merit.
14. I recognise that planning permission was granted in 2021 for a side extension to No 4 and other properties in Willowdene have been extended to the side, however this permission and the presence of side extensions on other properties does not outweigh the harm that I have found. The appellant refers to positive pre-application discussions with Officers at the Local Planning Authority (LPA). However, I am mindful that pre-application discussions are informal and are not binding on any future decision the LPA may make once a proposal has been subject to the formal planning process. Therefore, this does not lead me away from my conclusion on the main issue in this case.
15. I acknowledge the appellant's concerns over the Council's handling of the application. However, this is not a matter that I can consider under a Section 78 planning appeal and does not alter my findings, in which I have had regard solely to the planning merits of the proposal.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Katherine Robbie

INSPECTOR