



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2022

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3289682

88 Wavendon Avenue, Chiswick, London W4 4NS

- 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 Andrew Fletcher against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01176/88/P2, dated 2 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of rear and outrigger roof extensions incorporating three front roof windows to the house
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of the development from the Council's Decision Notice as this more accurately describes the elements which require planning consent. The Council's description of development is also reflected on the applicant's appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the existing building and the character and appearance of the locality, with special attention to the Turnham Green Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCA), in respect of development affecting conservation areas, states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and/or appearance of the area.
5. The appeal site is located along Wavendon Avenue, which according to the Turnham green Conservation Area Appraisal (TGCAA) is located in the Devonhurst Character Area and on the accompanying map is noted as a 'positive contributor' to the character and appearance of the area. The TGCAA mentions that Wavendon Avenue was developed in the early twentieth century pre-war period and is remarkable for its relative uniformity compared to Duke's Avenue and particularly to Barrowgate Road. All of the houses are of the same basic design, being of two storeys with full-height bays topped by gables with the houses appearing like terraces given the very small gap between dwellings. Of note are the details of buildings within the area which have consistent roof forms, tall chimneys, finials, and use of authentic materials.

6. The use of traditional materials such as timber, brick, and clay roof tiles along with the similar designs reinforce an architectural integrity, uniformity and authenticity which creates a formal picturesque townscape which along with vegetated front gardens and street trees gives a leafy and distinctive character. The majority of roof planes along this section of Wavendon Avenue are uncluttered and authentic to their architectural integrity with unaltered roof planes being the dominant characteristic of the street scene.
7. The appeal site displays a number of positive qualities which are experienced within the CA, being one of the characteristic semi-detached dwellings with a large two storey rear wing. The building contains many of the important design elements and original roof forms, large chimneys and use of original and authentic materials which reinforce its architectural integrity and contribute positively towards the local character, appearance and distinctiveness of the area.
8. In undertaking extensions to existing buildings, the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (LP) Policies CC1 and CC2 are design led policies which seek to achieve high quality design for new development which reflects the existing character and context of the locality. LP Policy CC4 relates to heritage assets and seeks that alterations and extensions demonstrate that regard is had to the significance of heritage assets and that development is in keeping with the building and wider area. LP Policy SC7 is specific to residential extensions and seeks that extensions do not harm existing character and appearance and also seeks that the Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD) is taken into account in planning determinations. The SPD contains further specific guidance in relation to design principles and detailed design considerations that for roof extensions places an emphasis on subservience and responding to the existing site and context of the locality.
9. The proposed dormer roof extension would be erected to the rear of the main building which would then join up to and extend onto the roof of the rear wing. The extension would have a similar height to the ridge of the rear dormer and would have minimal setback from the eaves of the dwelling. The dormer roof extensions would be large and would almost remove the entirety of the existing pitched roof of the main dwelling along with the pitch of the roof to the rear wing, elements which are positive features that contribute to the architectural authenticity and integrity of the existing dwelling and the significance of the CA. The proposed roof extensions would add a large amount of visual bulk and massing to the existing building which would be a dominant and disproportionate addition to the existing building.
10. I note comments that the applicant does not see that there is any harm to the CA on the basis that the proposed dormer windows are located to the rear of the property and are not visible to the street. There is no provision in Section 72 of the PLBCA or within planning policy that harm to a CA can only be caused where the proposed element is within the public realm or be visible from it. The duty under S72 of the PLBCA applies to all of the CA and therefore the visibility of the extension from the public realm is not a consideration that would be afforded weight in this circumstance when assessing harm to the CA.

11. The applicant's Statement of Case (SoC) notes that there is an example at 44 Wavendon Ave of a similar extension¹ to that proposed at the appeal site. Having read the Officer's Report in this case weight was given to the number of similar extensions in the locality, which the officer conceded would fail to correlate with the guidance provided by the SPD. As shown in Appendix A of the Applicant's SoC, there is more variety in dormer roof extensions in the location around the appeal site with smaller roof extensions which are confined to either roof plane predominating. I also note that according to both parties that some of the dormer roof extensions are historic and some do not benefit from planning consent, or have been undertaken before the recent change of policy position with the new extended CA adopted relatively recently in 2021.
12. Assessing the character and appearance of the street scene on my site visit, it was evident that considering the street scene as a whole, that larger roof extensions such as on the properties at No.84 and No.90 as constructed before the CA give a bulky and discordant appearance that interferes with the inherent architectural integrity and authenticity of the roof forms of the dwellings which is seen in the TGCAA as a positive characteristic. I am therefore not of the same opinion as the applicant's SoC that the limited number of larger dormer roof extensions placed on rear roof pitches are part of the significance of the CA or a positive characteristic of the locality.
13. It is clear to me that the current policy position as outlined in LP Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 place an emphasis on subservience, scale, massing and form where the impact to prominent roof forms are an inherent consideration for the placement of dormer roof extensions. The existing larger dormer roof extensions along the street do however illustrate how dominant these extensions are to the existing buildings and roof form which has resulted in the loss of many architectural details which in turn interferes with the character and appearance and significance of the CA. As such, The presence of these extensions does not provide adequate justification for further detrimental elements to be situated on the appeal building.
14. I also note the submission of a planning appeal² which seeks to illustrate that roof dormers and extensions are approved within CA's. Having read this appeal, it is evident that this appeal involved a different CA where different significance was being affected. It is also noted that the Inspector in this case did not have the benefit of reviewing the relevant CA Appraisal which details the elements of its significance, unlike this appeal. I am therefore not of the opinion that the considerations around the submitted appeals are analogous to the considerations around the appeal proposal and do not provide justification for the appropriateness of this scheme.
15. Turning to the proposed rooflights, along the street a number of properties have roof lights, however they are flush with the plane of the roof and a few in number with many dwellings having either one or two rooflights. Whilst the proposed rooflights are flush with the roof plane, the addition of 3 rooflights would be excessive and would take a large proportion of the width of the roof as well as adding unnecessary clutter to the architectural authenticity of the dwelling and front roof plane of the existing dwelling. The proposal would cause detriment to the form of the front roof plane and therefore conflict with the

¹ Council Ref: 01176/44/P2

² Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/19/3221777 First Floor Flat, 51 Thornhill Rd.

character and appearance of the host building and the greater significance of the CA.

16. Taken as a whole, the proposed dormer roof extension combined with the proposed roof lights would cause unacceptable detriment towards the architectural authenticity and integrity of the existing building and cause harm towards the character and appearance of the CA. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to the LP Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 which is accompanied by the SPD, all of which have been described previously. I therefore disagree with the applicant's SoC that no harm would be caused.
17. Although serious, the harm to the heritage asset in this case would be 'less than substantial,' within the meaning of the term in paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Paragraph 200 of the Framework states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 202 of the Framework requires that, where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
18. The applicant has not outlined any public benefits of the scheme, however the public benefits of the scheme would deliver larger residential accommodation for the existing dwelling, as well as result in short term employment opportunities in the construction of the extension. However, these benefits may also be present in a more appropriately designed scheme.
19. The proposal would likely result in short term employment opportunities and would provide a variety of residential accommodation, both of which are important planning policy objectives. However, these circumstances would not justify the harm I have identified.
20. I therefore find that the public benefits would not outweigh the harm to the CA. The scheme therefore conflicts with the Framework, which directs, at paragraph 199, 'that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation ... irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to their significance'.
21. In conclusion on this matter, I consider the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. It has not been shown that public benefits would outweigh this harm and so the proposal would conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR