



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 March 2022

by M Ollerenshaw BSc(Hons) MTPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/21/3285878

No 3 & 5 (Garden Flat), Stile Hall Gardens, Chiswick, London W4 3BS

- 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 Dr Phil Timms against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref P/2020/3309, dated 25 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'joint application for the erection of single storey side infill extensions to number 3 & 5'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021. However, it does not materially alter the national policy approach in respect of the issues raised in this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the Wellesley Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within the Wellesley Road Conservation Area (CA). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
5. The appeal site relates to two properties set within a terraced row on the north side of Stile Hall Gardens, which is a residential tree lined street mainly comprising two and three storey terraced properties. Properties are set back from the road behind low stone walls and planting. On the opposite side of Stile Hall Gardens there are several trees, beyond which is a railway cutting.
6. The significance of this part of the CA derives partly from the many properties of good architectural quality, of which the appeal properties are an example, which have symmetrical proportions and feature two storey bay windows, recessed front entrances, parapet roofs and steep front gables. The gaps between properties formed by the recessed alleyways are a further notable feature which give the properties the appearance of being semi-detached pairs and contributes

to their distinct identities. The appeal properties are identified as positive contributors in the Wellesley Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2018).

7. The proposed extensions would largely infill the gap between the side of Nos 3 and 5 at ground floor with a set back from the existing front elevations. The front of the extension to No 3 would comprise a fixed oak panel, whilst the front of No 5 would have an oak door to provide access to the existing ground floor flat. The extensions would have lead pitched roofs containing a total of four rooflights.
8. Given the size of the proposed extensions and their set back from the frontages, they would be subservient to the host properties. However, contrary to guidance contained in the Conservation Area Appraisal, which identifies the loss of gaps between buildings and inappropriate infilling as one of the threats to the CA, the extensions would result in the loss of the gap between the front of the two properties. That would erode the separate identities of the properties and would not reflect the prevailing pattern of development on this side of the road.
9. Furthermore, the use of lead to the roof of the extensions would not match the slate roofs of the properties and the four rooflights would give the roofs of the extensions a cluttered appearance. The slightly differing widths of the extensions, including the fixed oak panel door and the external oak door, would disrupt the symmetry of the properties. Moreover, in terms of size, design and external finish the oak panel door to the front of No 3 would not reflect the appearance of the existing front door. The recess from the frontages of the two buildings would reduce the visibility of the proposed extensions from Stile Hall Gardens, however they would still be visible within the street scene when viewed head on.
10. Paragraph 202 of the Framework states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use. The proposal would have less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. Although I acknowledge that the extensions would provide additional floorspace for the benefit of the occupants, there is no evidence before me to indicate that there would be any public benefit that would outweigh the harm identified above.
11. To conclude, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA and would be harmful to it. That would conflict with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030, which seek to achieve high design standards which respond to the wider context and conserve the character of conservation areas. The proposal would also be contrary to the Wellesley Road Conservation Area Appraisal, as described above, and the Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (2017), which states that new development in conservation areas must preserve and/or enhance the special character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

M Ollerenshaw

INSPECTOR