



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/22/3303024

8 Buckingham Road, Wanstead, Redbridge, London, E11 2EB

- 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 Robert Wells against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0780/22, dated 4 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a loft extension with rear dormer and side dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a loft extension with rear dormer and side dormer at 8 Buckingham Road, Wanstead, Redbridge, London, E11 2EB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 0780/22, dated 4 March 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan at scale 1:1250 and Drg Nos BP1, 03, 05, 06, 07 and 08.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The Council has raised no specific concern with regard to the rear dormer window. I have no reason to disagree with these findings. Therefore, the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed side dormer on the character and appearance of the area, including the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located within the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area (CA), an area of varied and predominantly late Victorian and Edwardian speculative housing development including some high-quality examples of Arts and Crafts and Art Deco architecture within a suburban setting.

4. No 8 is part of a group of three originally similar semi-detached pairs (Nos 2-12 even) that appear to post-date the Victorian and Edwardian architecture in the area. They are typical and pleasant sub-urban dwellings, each pair originally symmetrical around a central axis with hipped roofs, two-storey gabled bay windows and brick and roughcast painted render finishes, but with little by way of ornate detailing or special interest. The buildings retain their cohesion as a group through their broadly consistent use of materials. However, the roofscape of these six dwellings is noticeably mixed and significantly altered beyond its original form. Nos 2 and 4 are an asymmetrical pair with a side gable extension to No 2 and a hip to gable change at No 4. To the opposite side of the appeal property Nos 10 and 12 are also asymmetrical with No 10 displaying a hip to gable change and the hipped roof of No 12 unaltered. Although the appeal property and No 6 currently retain their hipped roofs, the significance of this symmetry is greatly diminished by changes to the group as a whole. As a consequence, whilst comfortable in their setting, contrary to the Council's findings I consider the group's contribution to the area's significance as a heritage asset to be just neutral.
5. The side dormer would be set up from the eaves, down from the ridge and in from both sides by reasonable margins in all cases. Moreover, given the narrow gap which exists between the appeal property and the altered gabled form of No 10 adjacent, it would not be exposed to any expansive views from Buckingham Road other than from mostly head-on, from where the hipped roof profile of the dwelling would remain evident and visually dominant. There would be some imbalance to the pair, but this would not be overtly conspicuous in the street scene and neither would it appear out of keeping within the group.
6. The Council has drawn my attention to an appeal that was dismissed in January 2022 relating to 28 Hereford Road (Ref APP/W5780/D/21/3280011). In that case the Inspector found that a proposed side dormer would harm the character and appearance of the building and the CA. However, the proposal related to a semi-detached dwelling of considerably different character to the current appeal property. Furthermore, the Inspector specifically noted the uniformity of unaltered roofs on similar houses in the wider CA and the uniformity of design along Hereford Road and the relatively unaltered state of the houses. It is significant that the Inspector found this to be at odds with the character of houses in other roads nearby. During my visit I saw for myself the difference in character between the much more regimented pattern of development along Hereford Road compared with the noticeably more varied and mixed development pattern along Buckingham Road. The circumstances between these two cases are not comparable.
7. The Council's *Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document 2019* (SPD) states that side dormers are generally not considered to be appropriate. However, they are not discounted as a matter of principle and in this case, for reasons given above, I find overall that the side dormer would be a sympathetic addition within the context of its setting, appearing neither awkward nor visually harmful to the street scene. It follows that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the CA, the significance of which as a heritage asset would therefore be preserved. There would be no conflict with the aims or objectives of the SPD or with Policies LP26, LP30 or LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030, adopted in 2018, insofar as they require the design of development, including household extensions, to be high quality, respectful and complementary to an existing building and an area's character,

and to conserve and enhance the character and significance of the historic environment. The proposal would also comply with the similar heritage conservation aims of The London Plan 2021 Policy HC1.

Conditions

8. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. In the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to ensure that the proposal is finished with materials to match the existing.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given, I find that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the area, including the Wanstead Grove Conservation Area. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR