



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2023

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 FEBRUARY 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/22/3307568

52 Loxley Road, London SW18 3LN

- 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 Ms Dora Healy against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
- The application Ref 2022/0156, dated 8 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 5 July 2022.
- The development proposed is installation of solar panels on the roof of the property.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a two-storey terraced dwellinghouse within a residential area where other dwellings are of a similar style. The roofscape, including the slightly projecting eaves line, gable detail, prominent chimneys and mostly clay roof tiles, is an attractive feature of the street scene. Many properties, including the appeal property, have small dormer windows that sit comfortably in the front roof slope and others have roof lights. These features do not overwhelm the roofs, there is a relative uniformity to the roofscape, and the clay tiled roofs are a prevailing feature.
4. Having regard to the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2007), the significance of the CA derives in part from the relationship between the fine-grained pattern of development surrounding the common and the open space of the common, as well as the grid pattern of streets comprising two to three storey terraces and semi-detached buildings of Victorian and Edwardian origin. The appeal property makes a positive contribution to the historic environment and spatial quality of the CA due to its traditional form and location amongst a relatively uniform pattern of buildings.
5. The proposed solar panels would cover most of the front roof slope. While the individual panels would be the same size and there would be some regularity to their arrangement on the roof, the panels would encircle the dormer window and largely obscure the clay tiles. Further, the black colour of the solar panels would contrast with the attractive clay materials of neighbouring roofs, drawing

attention to them. Due to their number, colour and placement, the solar panels would appear particularly conspicuous and incongruous in views from Loxley Road and from properties opposite the appeal site. Consequently, the solar panels would be detrimental to the street scene.

6. I have been referred to other examples of solar panels within the CA and other conservation areas in the Council's area. From the evidence before me, it does not appear that any of these have been installed on the main street facing elevations of the properties. Therefore, I do not find them comparable to the proposed development. Further, I did not observe solar panels on front roof slopes to be a common feature of the immediate vicinity.
7. For the reasons set out and having regard to the duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA, although the harm would be less than substantial.
8. Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (in this case the CA) should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development. While the solar panels would respond to the climate emergency, by reducing energy consumption from the main grid and producing a supply of green and affordable energy consistent with the aims of the Framework and Government strategies, solar panels on a single dwelling would be a small benefit, that would not outweigh the great weight to be given to the asset's conservation.
9. Overall, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA in conflict with Policies DMS1 and DMS2 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document Adopted March 2016. These policies require the scale and appearance of development to contribute positively to local spatial character, and sustain, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of the heritage asset. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh the conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Wright ,

INSPECTOR