The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2023

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/22/3306003
29 & 31 Staveley Road, Chiswick, London W4 3HU

- 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 & Mrs A Sultanov and Mr & Mrs P Cohen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
- The application Ref 01069/29-31/P1, dated 16 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2022.
- The development proposed is described as "displacement of the front roof pitches of the two properties at No 29 & 31 Staveley Road Chiswick W4 3HU and erection of a table-top flat roof".

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host properties and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Chiswick House Conservation Area (CHCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is occupied by a pair of semi-detached houses. They are situated in a residential street that comprises 2-storey semi-detached houses of similar age and appearance. Predominately these houses have hipped roofs, street-facing gables above bay windows and rendered elevations. These features, together with the street trees and well-vegetated front gardens, create a pleasant and relatively unified residential environment and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CHCA.

4. Unlike their neighbours, the appeal properties have large areas of flat roof to the sides of the street-facing gables and the main roof is set a long way behind the front elevation of the houses. The flat roofs and the associated box-shaped eaves above the front elevation are incongruous features that detract from the unity of the street scene and the appearance of the CHCA.

5. The proposal would involve the erection of pitched roofs to the sides of the street-facing gables and the formation of a flat roof above so as to create additional living accommodation at roof level. Whilst the removal of the flat roof would be beneficial, the resulting roof form would be at odds with the hipped roof arrangement that is prevalent in the area. The appeal properties

would have a top-heavy and incongruous appearance, something that would be exacerbated by the retention of the boxy eaves arrangement at the front of No.31.

6. Due to its design, size, height and massing I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the appearance of the host properties and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CHCA. As such the proposal fails to accord with Policies SC7, CC1, CC2 and CC4 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015) which seek to ensure that development complements the original building, the character of the area and conserves and enhances the significance of the Borough's heritage assets. There is also conflict with the aims of the Council's Residential Extension Guidelines (2017) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), the former of which states that in conservation areas development must be of a high standard of design and respect the existing architectural style, scale and proportion in and around the site.

7. The appellants have referred to a pair of appeal decisions upheld in 2021 in respect of extensions to 33 Staveley Road. One decision refers to a lack of change to the front of the property. The other refers to the proposal being limited in views from the public realm and wider views. Neither is the case in respect of the appeal proposal before me, which involves substantial development at the front of a pair of properties. I therefore attribute limited weight to the 2021 appeal decisions.

8. Whilst the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CHCA, the harm to this heritage asset would be less than substantial. In these circumstances Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires me to weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. As the proposal would provide additional private living accommodation there would be no public benefits associated with it.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole

INSPECTOR