



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2023

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/22/3303630

68 The Ridgeway, Acton, Hounslow, London W3 8LR

- 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 Pierre Renwick against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00940/68/P6, dated 8 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described on the planning application form as "Resubmission of application reference 00940/68/P5. Erection of a rear roof dormer extension with the addition of conservation style roof lights to the front roof slope".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area, with due regard to the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is part of a terrace of dwellings of an attractive suburban character. The site is within the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area (CA) which is focussed on 2 areas, first the Gunnersbury Park and Cemetery, and second the Gunnersbury Park residential estate. The appeal site is located in the latter area, which is considered to be a complete and relatively unspoilt example of a 1920s suburban estate, and which contributes to the importance of the CA as a designated heritage asset.
5. The terrace of dwellings containing the appeal site has been altered to a degree, with some properties having rear dormers and rooflights to the front. However, despite the alterations, the original roof form is still apparent and both the front and rear aspects of the appeal site make a positive contribution to the appreciation of this.

6. The proposal includes a dormer window on the rear roof slope. The Council's Residential Extension Guidelines¹ (the Guidelines) set out that dormer windows should be of a modest size and should not dominate the roof. The proposed rear dormer reflects some aspects of the Guidelines, including the setback from the eaves and ridge. However, the dormer would be an obtrusive box-like addition which would be an overdominant feature in views of the rear roof slope. The design of the windows is also unsympathetic to those of the host dwelling, and does not reflect the Guidelines in relation to filling the frame of the dormer.
7. Although the dormer is located to the rear of the terrace, it would face onto an open area and would be readily visible.
8. Rear dormers are not uncommon features on dwellings within the CA, although many that I observed served to confirm the harm that can arise from such bulky and unsympathetic additions to the roofscape, including those elsewhere within the terrace.
9. That said, I have some sympathy with the appellant in that their evidence indicates that the Council has recently approved rear dormers of a similar scale and design elsewhere in the CA, such as on Princes Avenue. However, these are some distance from the appeal site and do not set a prevailing context in respect of this particular proposal. I am also mindful that within the CA special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. For the reasons stated previously, I do not consider that the proposed rear dormer would do this.
10. The proposal would also include 3 rooflights on the front roof slope. Although these would be of a 'conservation' design, the number and placement of the rooflights would lead to a cluttered appearance which would detract from the relatively simple character of the roofscape. Other dwellings within the terrace include front rooflights, although these are more limited in number and do not establish a context which justifies the amount and arrangement of rooflights proposed on the appeal property.
11. My attention has been drawn to properties opposite the appeal site which include multiple rooflights. However, these indicate the cluttered appearance that can occur from a proliferation of rooflights. Furthermore, they are located within a roofscape that has been subject to other unfortunate additions including front dormers. Despite the proximity to the appeal site, the different nature of the properties opposite does not establish a precedent in support of the appeal proposal.
12. I have had regard to the details and appeal decision provided in relation to a property at North Street. However, this is within a different conservation area, and it has not been demonstrated that the heritage interest of that site arises from the same considerations as the appeal before me. In any event, I have determined this appeal on its own merits.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. Although the harm to the CA would be less than substantial, there are no public benefits that would outweigh that harm. The

¹ Residential Extension Guidelines: Supplementary Planning Document, 20 December 2017.

proposal would therefore be contrary to the design and heritage requirements of Policies CC1 and CC4 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 and Policy D4 of the London Plan 2021.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR