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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2023

**by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/22/3306200**

**Second Floor Flat, 11B Mayford Road, London, SW12 8RZ**

- 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 James Mansell against the decision of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
  - The application Ref 2022/0041, dated 5 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2022.
  - The development proposed is described as "loft main dormer, existing terrace extension, floor plan redesign and all associated works".
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and the appearance of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area.

## Reasons

3. The appeal property is one of a row of 6 detached and semi-detached dwellings of similar appearance on a short stretch of Mayford Road between the junctions with Wexford Road and Mayford Close. The property falls within the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area (the CA) and I have accordingly paid special attention to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the CA. The Wandsworth Common Conservation Area Appraisal (the Appraisal) notes that the prevailing material of construction within the vicinity of the appeal site is brick, with yellow brick for many rear and flank elevations and roofing materials of predominantly natural slate. This is an accurate description of the appeal property and its neighbours within this row. The appraisal further notes that the pattern of streets within the CA is mainly in the form of grids, essentially of two to three storey terraces, and semi-detached buildings of Victorian and Edwardian origin, and that the special character of the CA relies upon the relationship between the fine-grained pattern of development surrounding the common and the open space of the common. This grid form is generally true of the wider area around the appeal property, although there is modern development along Mayford Close near to Wandsworth Common railway station. The appeal property and surrounding area are therefore typical of development within the CA and so contribute to its significance.
4. Within this row of 6 houses there is a general degree of uniformity when viewed from the rear along Ravenslea Road or Mayford Close. While most of the properties have been altered to some extent, 5 of the 6 retain the original

rear gable dormer which rises through the eaves of the property. The exception is No 5, to one end of the row along Mayford Close at the edge of the CA. The property to the other end of the row, No 15, has 2 rear dormers set high on the roof slope. These are prominently visible within the street scene, taller than the rear chimney stack to that property and are a dominant feature of the rear of that building. Within this row the eaves line to the rear is generally consistent, allowing for the gable dormers and chimney stacks which punctuate the eaves to Nos 7 to 15.

5. The appeal property is one of the central buildings in the row. It has previously been modified with 2 box dormers to accommodate a bathroom in the roofspace and access to a roof terrace. While not particularly large in itself, the bigger of these dormers is visible from the neighbouring streets. As the immediately neighbouring properties to either side only have skylights to their rear roof slopes, this dormer is quite prominent within the row despite its relatively small size.
6. The proposed dormer would extend across almost the full width of the roof. It would be set back from the eaves and the original gable dormer at eaves level would be retained as part of the development. However, the width of the proposed dormer would result in it being a bulky and uncharacteristic addition to the rear roof slope of the property. I note that both Nos 5 and 15 within the row have substantial dormers, but in neither case do these extend across the full width of the roof slope. The central location of the appeal property within the row and the lack of rear roof extensions to either neighbouring property would highlight the size of the proposed dormer.
7. The appeal proposal also seeks to extend the existing roof terrace. This would include raising the eaves level of the building across approximately half the width of the rear elevation and introducing more substantial railings and privacy glass to the terrace edge. The appeal property presently has a roof terrace, but this is modest in scale and no wider than the original chimney stack. The proposed larger terrace would cause further additional harm due to the loss of the rhythmic roofscape created within the row by the consistent eaves line, gable dormers and chimney stacks at Nos 7 to 15.
8. The appeal property is a single property within the CA, and the proposed works would principally be limited to its rear roof slope. The Council has raised no objection to the new roof lights proposed to the front slope, and I see no reason to disagree with this as they would not alter the form of the roof. However, the works would be prominent due to the size of the dormer and creation of the roof terraces and the central position of the property within this row. Overall, the appeal proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA.
9. My attention has been drawn to other approved roof extensions in the surrounding area, including on Mayford Road. However, I have little information about the circumstances under which many of these approvals were granted. Several of the examples highlighted by the appellant include small dormers, and these are of limited relevance to the proposal before me. Larger dormers to properties along Ravenslea Road are less prominent as they are not visible from that street and are also partly concealed by the rear projections to these properties, a feature that is not present at the appeal property. I do acknowledge that there is variety in the local roofscape but given

the overall consistency of properties within this row, and the visibility and prominence of the appeal property within it, I accord these other extensions limited weight in determining this appeal.

10. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that where a development proposal will 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 proposal. In this instance, the appellant states that the proposed development would provide improved amenity for occupiers of the property with a larger roof terrace and 1 additional bedroom. They also suggest that the development would improve the appearance of the property and its environmental credentials. However, I have found that the development would be harmful to the appearance of the property overall.
11. The Framework requires that great weight be given to the conservation of the significance of the CA. In this instance, the limited public benefits arising from improvements to the quality of accommodation and its environmental credentials, and the presence of other roof extensions in the wider area, do not outweigh that great weight.
12. Overall, therefore, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and the appearance of the CA. It would therefore conflict with Policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the Development Management Policies Document. Taken together, these require that development contributes positively to local spatial character, that it conserve or enhance the significance of the affected heritage asset and that any roof extension be sympathetic to the style of the building, not visually intrusive and does not harm the street scene or building's appearance. It would also conflict with guidance in the Housing Supplementary Planning Document, which amongst other considerations advises that within a CA any alterations to the roof should preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of that particular area.

### **Conclusion**

13. The appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no considerations to lead me to determine this appeal other than in accordance with it. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above, the appeal fails.

*M Chalk*

INSPECTOR