



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2023

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/23/3314852

83 Strand on the Green, Chiswick, Hounslow, London, W4 3PU

- 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 N Bampton against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01076/83/P7, dated 9 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is the partial demolition and construction of a new additional storey, refurbishment and extension of the existing house and an extension to the basement; roof to be replaced with a new low-pitched loggia-style roof with a set-back attic storey.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for partial demolition and construction of a new additional storey, refurbishment and extension of the existing house and an extension to the basement; roof to be replaced with a new low-pitched loggia-style roof with a set-back attic storey at 83 Strand on the Green, Chiswick, Hounslow, London, W4 3PU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 01076/83/P7, dated 9 September 2022, subject to the attached schedule of conditions.

Main Issue

2. The Council's decision notice includes two reasons for refusal. The second reason for the refusal suggests that the size, design and overall appearance of the proposal would have a serious adverse effect on the amenities enjoyed by occupants of neighbouring properties. Paragraphs 5.1-5.3 of the Council's officer's report deals with the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions of neighbouring residents under the heading '*How would the proposal affect neighbours and is this acceptable?*'. The report's assessment firmly concludes on all the various elements of the proposal that there would be no unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties. I have no reason to disagree with these findings.
3. Having regard to the foregoing, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the Strand on the Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an originally detached, two-storey dwelling with a basement set behind a reasonably shallow frontage enclosed by a high wall to the back edge of the pavement along Strand on the Green, a road at this point which runs along the north bank of the River Thames. Despite now being linked to No 84 via a deeply recessed side extension to the neighbouring property constructed around 2013, the building maintains a detached appearance in the street scene. To the east of the site the road veers into Thames Road and behind properties facing Strand on the Green as it continues in this direction as a towpath along the riverside. The immediate area comprises a mix of residences and commercial buildings and uses within the Strand on the Green Conservation Area (CA), an area of eighteenth and nineteenth century riverside village ribbon development with later residential behind.
5. The Council's *Strand on the Green Conservation Area Appraisal 2018* (CAA) identifies that the area's special architectural and historic interest lies in its intrinsically tranquil setting beside the water's edge, with fishermen's cottages, boat builders' sheds, public houses, maltings and larger and more elegant private houses added in the late eighteenth century. Together with the vast majority of other buildings within the *Character Area 2: West* part of the CA, No 83 is identified within the CAA as a positive contributor but is neither statutorily nor locally listed.
6. The proposal comprises a number of elements including the extension of an existing basement, the replacement of an existing conservatory with a larger ground floor addition, a first-floor rear extension that would square the floor plan at this level and replacement of the existing pitched roof with a new low-pitched 'loggia-style' roof with a set-back attic storey.
7. The Council has argued that the design rationale for the proposal is unclear. On the contrary, the application was accompanied by an intelligible *Design and Access Statement* and a comprehensive *Historical Context and Heritage Impact Assessment*. The appeal property is a relatively large five-bedroom house that belies its late eighteenth/early nineteenth century origins as a much smaller three-bay cottage with a façade arranged symmetrically around a central entrance door. The appellants have coherently demonstrated how through the twentieth century and beyond, leading up to the present day significant changes have altered the size and appearance of No 83 and its setting along Strand on the Green.
8. Whilst No 83 makes a positive contribution to the CA, I have not been presented with, nor directed to, any evidence from the Council to suggest that this is derived from any architectural or historic significance to the building itself. Through the extensions and alterations that have taken place, including a 1980s side two-storey pastiche that has masked the building's original form and proportions, it appears today as representative of neither a small fisherman's cottage of its time nor a typically later grand home. The building is pleasing in its setting and prominent in the street scene as well as from longer views, including the panorama of Strand on the Green from the opposing riverbank. But given its evolution, I share the appellants' view that it can reasonably adapt to further change whilst remaining a positive contributor.

9. The rear of the building is tightly enclosed and surrounded principally by the rear elevations of tight-knit terraced homes. I saw that the significant majority were extended at roof level with a variety of large and dominant 'box-like' dormer windows. There was little evidence to be seen of any building's original roof form within the rear garden settings. As such, the contemporary fenestration pattern proposed to the remodelled rear elevation of No 83 would not be out of place, where its visual impact would be restricted to its enclosed surroundings. The single-storey part of the rear extension and new rear exposed basement lightwell would be obscured from view other than from the immediate confines of the appeal site and would appear as appropriately integrated parts of a cohesive design.
10. The first-floor extension would have only a shallow depth and would serve to square the existing stepped rear elevation. Although it would be greater than half the width of the original house, contrary to the Council's *Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document - A Guide for Householders* (December 2017) (SPD), its size would not be excessive but merely informed by the constraints and opportunities offered by the incremental alterations and extensions that have previously taken place to the rear in a past incoherent fashion. It would not be seen as an adjunct to the building but rather as a proportionate and integrated piece of a remodelled rear façade. As a consequence, I do not share the Council's view that it would appear as a harmful addition.
11. The officer's report acknowledges that the enlarged basement would be discreetly located under the footprint of the original house and that it would have little visual impact. I concur. By being larger than the original property, which has evolved significantly over time into a large home, I am unable to identify how this would impact the character of the dwelling or wider area.
12. The principle of adding a storey at roof level to existing buildings is one firmly established along Strand on the Green. The very imposing and prominent Pier House Laundry Building to the west of the appeal site, and which is seen with No 83 in the panorama from the south bank of the Thames, had a second floor added in the form of a mansard style roof as recently as 2018/2019. This obviously transformed the appearance of the upper levels of the building; one also identified as a positive contributor to the CA. There are a number of other obvious examples that can be clearly seen including contemporary roof additions to some of the originally larger private houses that were built fronting the towpath. These examples are significant, not only in terms of their visual presence, but also in asserting and defining how this part of the CA has evolved, and how it continues to do so.
13. The roof alteration and inclusion of an additional attic storey would undeniably add bulk and mass to the existing building and change its appearance. However, given the established evolution of No 83 and its surroundings, it is evident that such change need not automatically equate to harm.
14. The increased height of No 83 would not be out of place within a context where buildings range from two to four storeys with no particular rhythm or pattern between them. This eclectic mix is part of the area's charm. The additional height to No 83 would merely add to the mix with a remodelled building that would be neither oversized nor unneighbourly but instead appropriately in scale and proportion within its surroundings.

15. The contemporary style of the new roof would equally reflect other development, both at roof level and in terms of some infill developments along the waterfront. As a deliberately conceived lightweight addition, I find that it would complement the existing building. Further, its considered recessed position over the 1980's side addition would enable the more modest origins of the building to be re-established and better appreciated, with the appearance of the dwelling overall elevated to reflect the grander scale it has progressed to become.
16. Overall, I share the appellants' view that the proposal would represent a progressive evolution of the building to one that would reflect the mixed architectural styles of the area and which would transform its undistinguished form, which reflects little of its origins, to a dwelling that would appear more distinctive and appropriate to its position and in harmony with its surroundings. For these reasons I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the CA. As such, the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset would be unaffected. There would therefore be no conflict with the aims or objectives of the SPD, Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 or SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 as far as they require development to show proper regard to, and maintenance of, an area's context and character, and to conserve any heritage asset and its setting. For these same reasons, the proposal would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Conditions

17. The Council has suggested a number of conditions which I have considered. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans is necessary to provide 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.
18. In order to maintain the character of the property and to safeguard future occupants from the risk of flooding, a condition is required to prevent the basement from being occupied as a separate unit of accommodation or to be used as sleeping accommodation; both in accord with the SPD guidance. To safeguard the living conditions of nearby residents and to ensure further compliance with the SPD, it is reasonable to require by condition that any person carrying out the excavation or construction work for the basement is a member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme and that a Construction Logistics Plan for these works is approved and implemented. For the same reason, a condition is imposed to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Construction Method Statement which accompanied the planning application.
19. I impose a condition that would require the development to be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment which accompanied the planning application in order to mitigate any risks from flooding.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given, I find that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the appeal property or to the Strand on the Green 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.

SCHEDULE OF 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: Drg Nos P001, P002, P009, P010, P011, P012, P020, P021, P022, P023, P024, P025, P109 Rev C, P110 Rev C, P111 Rev C, P112 Rev C, P113 Rev C, P120 Rev C, P121 Rev C, P122 Rev C, P123 Rev C, P124 Rev C, P125 Rev A, P126 Rev A and P127 Rev A.
- 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.
- 4) The basement hereby permitted shall at no time be used or occupied as a separate dwelling independent of the main house and shall not be used as sleeping accommodation.
- 5) No excavation or construction works on the basement hereby permitted shall be carried out until such time as the person carrying out the work is a member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme and its code of practice, and the details of the membership and contact details are clearly displayed on the site so that they can be easily read by members of the public.
- 6) No excavation or construction works on the basement hereby permitted shall be undertaken prior to the submission and approval in writing by the local planning authority of a Construction Logistics Plan which will include delivery timings, suspension of bays and temporary licence if material storage is required on the public highway. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the details so approved.
- 7) The development shall be carried out and completed in full accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Innervision Design Ltd dated July 2022.
- 8) The development shall be carried out and completed in full accordance with the Construction Method Statement prepared by Noble Structures Ltd dated 27 August 2022, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR