



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2023

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/W/22/3310512

141A Askew Road, Hammersmith And Fulham, London W12 9AU

- 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 Oskar Bogdanowicz against the decision of London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2022/02106/FUL, dated 25 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of an additional floor at roof level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies in a busy commercial street with a mix of shops, café/takeaways, and offices at ground floor level. The buildings about the wide pavements on either side of the road, and comprise a series of terraces of three or four storeys in height. To the south-east of the site, 157-163 have brick upper storeys with decorative window surrounds and pitched slate roofs with large chimney stacks. Opposite these there is a row of residential buildings with front-facing rendered gables and decorative bays. To the northwest, 118-192 also have bay windows, but with Dutch gables above. So, although there is a disparate range of architectural styles in the road, each terraced grouping has its own character, giving the street an orderly appearance.
4. The property itself lies towards the centre of another terrace of buildings which have a shared character. In this case it is one of a long, curved sweep of three-storey buildings stretching from 127-151. There is a high degree of symmetry along this row, with simple brick facades above the shopfronts, punctuated by similarly proportioned windows that are aligned both horizontally and vertically. The buildings have shallow pitched roofs, but these are hidden behind an unadorned parapet wall. From ground level near the buildings, the tops of the chimneys and television aerials are just visible. However, they are set well back from the frontage, and the parapet provides a continuous feature all along the top of the terrace, which gives the sweeping curve of buildings a high degree of unity and cohesion.

5. Policy DC1 of the Hammersmith & Fulham Local Plan 2018 (the Local Plan) requires all development to respect and enhance its townscape context. The supporting text explains that this involves a wider consideration than just the design and materials of individual buildings. The impact of the proposal should therefore be considered in relation to the terrace as a whole, not just the appearance of the building itself. Policy DC4 requires that extensions to existing buildings should successfully integrate into the architectural design of the existing building, and be compatible with the character of neighbouring properties and their setting. The policy identifies a range of issues that should be considered in assessing proposals. For rooftop additions, one of these is the impact on the skyline silhouette.
6. The proposed additional floor would be in the form of a mansard roof spanning almost the entire width of the building. It would be set back from the front façade, behind the parapet wall, so it would not be visible from the pavement immediately in front of the building. However, it would be readily apparent from the opposite side of the road, where it would breach the skyline above the simple, uninterrupted sweep of the parapet. It would therefore appear as an intrusive element in the street scene, which would be incompatible with the surrounding buildings, and harmful to the symmetrical character of the wider terrace.
7. Furthermore, the site lies opposite the junction with Bassein Park Road. The terrace of buildings, including the appeal site, forms the focal point at the end of this long, straight road, and can be seen from a considerable distance. The symmetry of the upper levels of the buildings, and the consistency of the roofscape, are readily appreciated in these views. The mansard roof would be a prominent and incongruous feature, protruding well above the parapet, and silhouetted against the sky. It would, therefore, be visually disruptive, and would harm the orderly character of the frontage.
8. The supporting text to Policy DC4 of the Local Plan says that front mansards will need to integrate successfully with the building, and where there are existing extensions on a street, these will be taken into account in determining the appropriateness of new proposals. In this regard, my attention has been drawn to a number of roof extensions elsewhere along Askew Road, and I have had regard to these in arriving at my decision.
9. No 125, which lies approximately 40 metres to the north, on the same side of the road, has a mansard roof. However, this building lies beyond the sweeping terrace that is unified by the continuous parapet. It is rendered, and its upper floor windows are at a lower level. It is, therefore, visually separate from the symmetrical row of buildings containing the appeal site. Furthermore, the mansard does not protrude above the line of the parapet on the adjacent terrace, so it is not a prominent feature in the roofscape. It is not, therefore, directly comparable with the appeal proposal.
10. No 120 lies diagonally opposite the appeal site, and comprises a relatively recent four-storey building. The levels and proportions of the first and second floor fenestration relate well to the older terraces to either side, so it sits comfortably between them. The third floor comprises a mansard roof across the entire width of the building and set behind a parapet. In this case, however, the building has been designed as a coherent whole, and the mansard is an integral component, rather than an incongruous addition. It does

not, therefore, affect my conclusions on the appropriateness of the appeal proposal.

11. Nos 65, 69, 79 and 83 lie approximately 200 metres to the north, and form part of a curved terrace of three storey buildings. Each of these four properties has had a fourth-floor roof addition, which rises above the parapet of the terrace. The evidence indicates that the most recent was approved in 2020. However, whilst the evidence demonstrates that they have all been added since 2008, I have not been provided with the dates that the earlier ones were approved, and, in particular, whether they pre-dated the adoption of the current Local Plan in 2018.
12. In any event, this terrace is somewhat distant from the appeal site, and there is no intervisibility between the two. Furthermore, the sweep of the parapet, and the roofscape of this terrace, is not so markedly consistent as that containing the appeal site, so they are not wholly comparable. To my mind, these additions illustrate the harm that would result from piecemeal additions to the roofscape of the intact terrace at 127-151. They do not, therefore, lead me to consider that the appeal scheme would respect and enhance its townscape context.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would be contrary to Policies DC1 and DC4 of the Local Plan, which seek to ensure that extensions to existing buildings are of high quality, and are compatible with the scale and character of existing development.

Conclusion

14. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR