



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 July 2023

by E Pickernell BSc MSC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/23/3314069

21 Constitution Hill, Clifton, Bristol City, Bristol BS8 1DG

- 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 Conor Tierney against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/03256/H, dated 27 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Neither the appellant, nor a representative were present to provide access to the site during my site visit. Nevertheless, I was able to see the site clearly from surrounding streets and as such I have proceeded with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, bearing in mind it would be within the Clifton and Hotwells Conservation Area (CA) and within the setting of the grade II listed 1 – 19 Bellevue (and attached front basement area railings).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is an end of terrace property in an elevated position on Constitution Hill, which slopes steeply up to the west. The property is part of a terrace of houses which differ in terms of materials and detailing but which have similar butterfly roofs, set behind front and side parapet walls. The houses are stepped, due to the topography, with the appeal site being the lowest in the group. Although there is some variety in building form within the area, terraces with butterfly roofs are prevalent, particularly to the south and south east of the site and give the area a formal and traditional character.
5. The site is located within the Clifton and Hotwells CA. The character of the CA is influenced by its topography with the main streets following the contours of the steep slopes and terraces of properties following the landform. The juxtaposition of grand, imposing classical terraces with more intimate and artisan properties add to the distinctive character of the CA. Broad consistency in scale and use of distinctive architectural details provide visual harmony and interest to the area. Insofar as is relevant to this appeal, the significance of the CA is derived from its architecture quality, layout and history, including the

presence of natural springs which influenced much of the development in the area.

6. The appeal property is typical of the area and is identified in the Clifton and Hotwells Character Appraisal and Management Proposals (adopted June 2010) (CAMP) as a 'Character Building' that has value within the overall townscape context and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.
7. The proposed mansard roof extension would abut the existing front and side parapet walls. It would slope back from the front elevation of the building and due to its elevated position, the extension would not be visible from immediately in front of the appeal site. However, it would be highly visible from several vantage points within the CA, including on approach from the east on Constitution Hill, from Bellevue to the north and from Bellevue Court/Hillside to the south. The Council also refer to views from the gardens of properties on Glentworth Road, however given the intervening development and the oblique angle between the sites the extension would not be prominent in such views.
8. However, the proposed extension would erode the characteristic butterfly roof form and introduce a flat roof which would be at odds with the roofs of the rest of the terrace and the wider area. The use of conflicting modern materials and the proportions of the windows would result in an incongruous addition which would detract from the traditional proportions and detailing of the host dwelling and that of the terrace. The proposed mansard roof would project above the parapet of the adjoining property and would therefore interrupt the characteristic, rhythmic stepping of buildings down the slope. For these reasons the proposal would harm the character, appearance and significance of the CA as a whole.
9. The listed terrace dates from the late 1700s and comprises three main storeys with basements and attics within mansard roofs, giving them grand proportions. Many of the properties retain original railings and doors with fanlights and these retained features add to the significance of the LB.
10. The setting of the LB comprises the greenspaces to the front and rear and nearby buildings. The appeal site is physically separated from the LB by the road, however it is in close proximity to the southernmost property within the terrace (1 Bellevue). The appeal site and 1 Bellevue are appreciated together from similar vantage points on Constitution Hill. The front elevation of the appeal property terminates the view south along Bellevue and its rear and side elevations are in the foreground of views of the LB from Bellevue Court/Hillside to the south. Insofar as is relevant to this case the LB derives its significance from its high quality traditional architectural detailing and its formal setting.
11. The increase in the height of the building, and the interruption of the rhythm of the terrace in such close proximity to the LB would erode the clear hierarchy between the grand terrace and more modest buildings nearby, including the appeal site. This would be particularly apparent from Bellevue where the extension would be clearly visible at the end of the road. The discordant nature of the extension would draw the eye, detracting from the LB. For these reasons the proposal fails to preserve the setting of the LB and would therefore be harmful to its significance.
12. As required by paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated

heritage asset. In this case the proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA and the LB. Paragraph 202 of the Framework requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

13. The proposal would result in investment in the property which would facilitate the general refurbishment of the building and increased security. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that these improvements to the property could not be made in the absence of the extension. The proposal would also provide much needed accommodation for a growing family and facilitate homeworking although these are largely private benefits and I therefore afford them limited weight. Overall, the modest public benefits of the proposal, are outweighed by the great weight that must be given to the conservation of both heritage assets.
14. Having regard to all of the above, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, the CA and the LB. It would therefore conflict with Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011) and Policies DM26, DM27, DM30 and DM31 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (adopted July 2014). It would also conflict with the CAMP and relevant paragraphs of the Framework. Together and amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development conserves heritage assets and responds to and reinforces local character and distinctiveness including existing patterns of development and the form, height and roofscapes of existing buildings.

Other Matters

15. During my site visit I noted other mansard roofs in the locality, most notably on the listed terrace on Bellevue. These are largely traditional in form and materials and because they are relatively consistent in form across the terrace they do not appear as incongruous additions to the building, in contrast with the appeal proposal. I noted a small number of other examples of mansard roofs in the CA, however these are very much the exception, are not in locations which are as prominent as the appeal site and differ in design to that proposed. My attention has been drawn to Oak Cottage which has a modern roof extension, however this is not within a terrace and therefore does not result in the loss of consistency in the way the appeal proposal does. As such I find limited similarities between these examples and the appeal proposal. I have been provided with a list of other examples, however I have not been provided with any details of the proposals to which they refer. I acknowledge that there are circumstances where modern materials can be appropriate within a historic environment. However, for the reasons outlined above, in this instance I find the proposal to result in harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

16. I conclude that the proposals conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

E Pickernell

INSPECTOR