



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 September 2023

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/23/3314085

First floor flat, 53 Mafeking Avenue, Hounslow, Brentford TW8 0NL

- 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 Ms Magdalena Rokosz against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00721/53A/P1, dated 15 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion complete with dormer and all associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion complete with dormer and all associated works at First floor flat, 53 Mafeking Avenue, Hounslow, Brentford TW8 0NL in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 00721/53A/P1, dated 15 July 2022, and the plans and drawings submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this planning permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings: Unnumbered Location Plan – Plotted Scale 1:1250, Existing Drawings - B144261-01-1100 Rev B and Proposed Drawings - B144261-01 – 3100 Rev C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the rear roof dormer extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing property, including hung tile side and rear walls to match the properties existing tiled roof.
 - 4) No additional windows, doors or other glazed openings shall be formed in the dormer extension hereby permitted.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant's appeal submissions include an amended proposed drawing. This proposes a reduction in the number of proposed rooflights along the front roof slope of the appeal property, from 3 to 2. As this amendment addresses a concern raised by the Council and does not significantly alter the nature of the development originally proposed. Therefore, I have accepted the amended proposed drawing as a substitute for the proposed drawing submitted with the application. I have also determined the appeal on this basis and do not consider that the interests of any party have been prejudiced by my having done so.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the St Paul's Brentford Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Mafeking Avenue comprises a residential street incorporating terraced properties. Amongst these, the appeal property occupies a mid-terrace position and has been subdivided into two separate flats. The appeal property was added to the St Paul's Brentford Conservation Area as part of an extension to this in 2021.
5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention should be paid to the desirability that the character or appearance of the conservation area should be preserved or enhanced. Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') requires me to assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset).
6. Based on my observations and the St Paul's Brentford Conservation Area Appraisal ('the Appraisal'), the significance of the Conservation Area lies, in part, in the layout and appearance of its mainly Victorian and Edwardian properties.
7. In particular, the Appraisal identifies the Edwardian two-storey terraced housing on Mafeking Avenue as particularly high quality because of the white stucco dressings around the windows and the full height canted bays at the front. The frontage of the appeal property also exhibits these characteristics and positively contributes to the character and appearance of the street scene.
8. However, I observed that the rear elevation of the appeal property incorporates an external staircase and the wider terrace does not contain the same high level of detailed design, originality and uniformity compared with the frontage. As such, this does not form such a key component to the character and appearance of the area.
9. Within Conservation Areas the guidance in the SPD¹ requires that rear dormers should be modest in size and not dominate the roof and to achieve this to be less than half the width of the original roof, set down one metre from the ridge and one metre above the eaves. Furthermore, the SPD only allows a single front rooflight. The threats to the Conservation Area in the Appraisal, include inappropriate scale and character of roof, side and rear extensions, to maintain quality, skylines and sympathetic treatment.
10. Even so, there are rear dormer extensions present in the row of properties where the appeal site is located. Whilst these generally predate the SPD and the inclusion of Mafeking Avenue within the CA, they nonetheless inform the character and appearance of the area and also show that the original roofscape of the row has already been altered.
11. Despite not being set-in from the ridge of the roof, the proposed dormer would have a set-back from the eaves of the roof and the boundary with 51 Mafeking

¹ Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document A Guide for Householders

Avenue and would utilise matching materials. Therefore, notwithstanding its size, the proposed dormer extension would acceptably assimilate with the existing roof. Also, being located to the rear there would be limited views of the proposal from the surrounding streets. Moreover, the proposed dormer extension would be of a similar scale and form to the existing nearby dormer extensions. Consequently, from where it would be seen, the proposed dormer extension would be viewed in the context of an altered roofscape nearby, and similar existing dormer extensions and therefore would not appear discordant.

12. Notwithstanding the requirements of the SPD, the Council acknowledges that if hidden behind the front pitch, two rooflights may be acceptable along front roof slopes. Most notably, there are other properties along Mafeking Avenue which incorporate two rooflights. One of the proposed rooflights would, in part, be screened by the roof of the canted bay. As such, the proposed quantum and arrangement of rooflights would be acceptable.
13. Whilst the proposal would be inconsistent with the requirements of the SPD for roof alterations, this is guidance. Furthermore, having regard to the individual circumstances of the appeal property and its surroundings, the proposal would accord with its overarching aim to protect the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.
14. For the above reasons, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the St Paul's Conservation Area. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015-2030) Volume One. Together, these Policies require developments to respond to any local architectural vernacular and characteristics of the area, complement the original building, harmonise with adjoining properties and maintain the character of the general street scene and function well in themselves and in their effect on the surrounding area. Also, that proposals retain, conserve and reuse an asset in a manner appropriate to its value and significance.

Conditions

15. In considering the suggested conditions, I have had regard to the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. I have imposed the standard timescale condition for the implementation of the permission and a condition specifying the relevant plans and drawings as this provides certainty. To ensure that the development safeguards the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, I have specified a condition requiring that the materials for the proposed dormer extension match the existing property. To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and living conditions of neighbours, it is necessary to specify a condition restricting certain alterations to the dormer extension hereby approved.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR