The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 May 2023

by N Duff BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25TH September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/23/3317221
27 Amner Road, Wandsworth, London SW11 6AA

- 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 Haichuan Yu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
- The application Ref 2022/2174, dated 24 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 December 2022.
- The development proposed is Alterations including erection of extension to roof of three-storey back addition. Installation of air conditioning condenser unit.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the decision notice and appeal form, as opposed to from the application form, since this reflects changes made to the proposal during the life of the planning application, and thus the appeal proposal that is before me.

3. Following the determination of the planning application subject of this appeal, the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 (LP) was adopted in July 2023. Policies from this plan were referred to in the reason for refusal when they were emerging. The adopted versions of these policies have since been submitted and the appellant has had the opportunity to comment on them. Therefore, neither party is prejudiced by my taking these policies into account in my determination of the appeal.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Amner Road is residential in character and addressed by a Victorian terraced row to its western side, the appeal site is a mid-terrace property. The properties within this terrace are routinely served to the rear by three storey projecting outriggers with gable ends that face rearwards. These follow a rhythmic pattern along the terrace, punctuated by consistently positioned chimneys. I note here that the appeal property is not listed and not located within a conservation area.

6. The proposed extension would involve altering the roof's form from pitched to flat in order to create additional internal height and would necessitate removal

of the chimney that currently sits between the host property and its immediate neighbour. The fenestration would remain as existing, whilst an air conditioning unit is proposed on top of the amended roof.

7. The proposed extension would be modest in size when viewed in isolation. However, it would alter the roof shape, and, due to its design, would be out of keeping with the host property and the adjoining property which shares the rear projecting outrigger. The proposal would interrupt the strong rhythm of the roofline to the rear of the historic terrace and as a result would erode the character of the property and wider terrace. This effect would be further exaggerated by the loss of the chimney which makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the property and wider area. The harm would be especially apparent from private views from surrounding properties and appreciable in glimpsed views from publicly accessible vantage points, most particularly from Roseneath Road. The proposed extension would therefore appear incongruous and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

8. The appellant has referred to other examples of similar roof extensions in the area, one being located in close proximity to the appeal site within the neighbouring terrace situated to the rear. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are local examples of similar development, no such example falls within the particular terrace that contains the appeal property. The consistent and uninterrupted nature of roof forms across the rear of this terrace makes a strong positive contribution to the character of the area despite sometimes insensitive additions elsewhere. The erosion of the consistency at second floor level that would result from the scheme would harmfully lessen the contribution made by the terrace in character and appearance terms.

9. Some other roof alterations such as dormers are apparent in the vicinity, including on the appeal property. However, these tend to be located to the main roofs of dwellings and are of limited relevance to my consideration of the specific proposal that is before.

10. The extension would be constructed in appropriate materials retaining the existing fenestration, and due to its small scale, the air conditioning unit would not be harmful. However, taken as a whole, the scheme would unacceptably erode the built rhythm of the terrace. Accordingly, the appropriate materials and fenestration do not overcome my concerns with the overall scheme and the adverse effect it would cause.

11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policies LP1 and LP5 of the LP which seek to ensure that developments provide a high-quality design that contributes positively to local character and that any roof alteration visible from the street or any other public place is sympathetic to the style of building. I also find that the proposal conflicts with the principles of chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks good design sympathetic to the local area.

12. Having regard to the Wandsworth Local Plan – Housing – Supplementary Planning Document (2016) (SPD), it requires alterations to roofs to be designed to ensure that the character and appearance of the house and area is protected. For the reasons set out above the proposal conflicts with the guidance contained in the SPD.

Other Matters

13. I have noted objections/concerns raised by interested parties with respect to matters including the effect upon neighbouring living conditions. However, as I have found the scheme to be unacceptable for other reasons, it is not necessary for me to explore such matters further here.

14. The appellant has stated that the proposed alteration would improve internal head height within the dwelling. Whilst I accept that the proposal would provide enhanced and more comfortable living quarters, the associated benefits would be primarily of a private rather than public nature and would not attract sufficient weight to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

15. The appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight to indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

N Duff

INSPECTOR