
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2023

by C Harding BA (Hons) PGCert PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/23/3328077

3 Overton Drive, Wanstead, Redbridge, London E11 2NN

- 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. Irfan Motala against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1004/23, dated 11 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 6 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is first-floor side extension, single-storey rear extension and a loft conversion with three front roof lights, one side roof light, and a rear dormer.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have also dealt with another appeal Ref APP/W5780/D/23/3323018 on this site. That appeal is the subject of a separate decision.
3. In reaching this decision, I have had regard to the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') that was published on 20 December 2023 but as it does not involve changes to national policy affecting the proposal, I have not sought the parties' comments upon it.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including its effect upon the significance of Wanstead Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. 3 Overton Drive is a two-storey dwelling located at the northern edge of Wanstead Park Conservation Area ('the CA'). Accordingly, I have had regard to the statutory duty set out at Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. Policy HC1 of the London Plan ('LP') reflects this requirement.
6. The significance of the CA, insofar as it relates to this appeal, is derived from the historic interest of the landscaped park and its amenity as publicly accessible open space. The appeal property is located within the Suburban Fringe area of the CA, where the Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies that the residential properties, although "decent" examples of their kind, are of no special historic or architectural interest and are neutral in terms of their contribution to the significance of the CA.

7. The appeal property lies on the southern side of Overton Drive and is paired within number 1 Overton Drive. A further three sets (numbers 5 and 7, 9 and 11, 13 and 15) of paired properties extend along the street to the east. 17 Overton Drive is of a similar scale and design, but sits alone, other than a two-storey link to number 15. 19 Overton Drive, being of a different scale and design, is detached and forms a bookend to dwellings on the southern side of the street.
8. A previous Inspector¹ identified that Overton Drive has a consistent appearance and rhythm when viewed from the road, including the gaps between properties at roof level, two-storey front gable projections, flat-roof two-storey links between dwellings, hipped roofs and prominent chimneys. I acknowledge that as well as variety within the configuration of the dwellings on this side of Overton Drive, there is also some variation in the rendering of dwellings and treatment of the two-storey front gable projections within the street. However, I have no reason to disagree with the general findings of the previous Inspector. In particular, there is clear and pleasing uniformity between the four sets of paired properties, including the appeal property.
9. There is a clear visual gap between the Nos 3 and 5 Overton Drive due to the flat roofs of the side links. This gap, as the first between dwellings on the southern side of the road when approaching from the west, establishes the rhythm of the street. As 1 Overton Drive is at the end of this part of the street and is not linked to any property to the west, it does not perform a similar role.
10. I accept that the proposed first-floor side extension with hipped roof above would serve to rebalance the pair of properties formed by numbers 1 and 3 Overton Drive, as number 3 already features a first-storey side extension with hipped roof above. However, it would also reduce the gap between numbers 3 and 5 Overton Drive, would be visible from the street and not concealed to any great extent. It would therefore erode the otherwise strong architectural rhythm between the four sets of paired properties.
11. The presence of an existing smaller level of separation between 15 and 17 Overton Drive would not mitigate this harm, as 17 Overton Drive is unpaired, nor would the presence of the extended roof form of 1 Overton Drive, which forms the end of this small group of similar properties. Consequently, these do not represent wholly comparable situations.
12. Furthermore, the fact that the appeal property is set slightly forward of number 5 Overton Drive, instead of reducing the significance of the gap between the properties, means that the proposed side extension and overall increased size and bulk of the appeal property would appear more prominent when approached from an easterly direction, even accounting for the proposal being set-back from the front elevation.
13. Overall, I find that this element of the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
14. The proposed rear dormer would be a large, flat-roofed feature within the rear roof slope of the property. However, it would be situated below the ridge of the main roof and above the current eaves. When viewed in the context of the

¹ APP/W5780/D/21/3284462

extended roof plane which would result from the proposed first-floor side extension, it would appear as appropriately proportioned.

15. Flat roofs are a common design feature of the street. This fact, in combination with the location of the proposed dormer windows at the rear of the property means that this element of the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the area, as would the proposed rooflights, by way of their size and discreet locations. The Council has raised no concerns in relation to the proposed rear extension, and I agree that it would not be harmful.
16. Nonetheless, whilst the appeal property currently has a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the CA, the first-floor side extension and associated roof alterations would cause harm. I find that this harm would be less than substantial.
17. Paragraph 208 of the Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset that this harm should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal. In this case, no public benefits have been identified which would clearly outweigh this harm.
18. I therefore conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area including the CA. There would be conflict with Policy HC1 of the London Plan and RLP Policies LP26, LP30 and LP 33. Together and amongst other matters, these policies seek to ensure development conserves the significance of heritage assets, be of a high architectural design quality, is well integrated and has regard to the surrounding area in terms of form, massing and design, reinforces positive and distinctive local character, and maintains or improves the appearance of the streetscene.

Other matters

19. The appellant has stated the Council had provided positive pre-application advice in relation to a scheme involving similar elements in 2021. However, I have no details of that particular proposal before me. I therefore afford this limited weight in considering the proposal which is before me.
20. I understand that planning permission exists for a scheme of extensions at the appeal property, which includes the extension of the roof of the property over a proposed two-storey side extension. However, the roof design in that instance would not be directly comparable to that before me now. It does not, therefore, weigh significantly in favour of the scheme as a fallback position.

Conclusion

21. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole. No material considerations, including the Framework, indicate that there would be justification for a taking a decision other than in accordance with the development plan in this case.
22. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Harding

INSPECTOR