



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 March 2024

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DiP TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/23/3321559

43 Gressenhall Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 5QH

- 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 Faiz Ahmad (Mirza Sharif Ahmad Foundation) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2022/4644, dated 30 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as interior alterations to convert an end of terrace single family dwelling into two flats. Proposed loft conversion and roof extension consisting of roof alterations to an end of terrace dwelling and including hip to gable roof extension, an addition of a dormer to the roof at the rear of the property and addition of two skylights to the roof slope at the front of the property and addition of one skylight on the existing rear extension roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. In its decision and officer report, the Council refers to, amongst other things, Policies DMS1 and DMH5 of the Wandsworth Development Management Policies Document 2016. However, the Council has since adopted the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 (July 2023) ('WLP'). As a result, those policies are superceded and I have had no further regard to them.
3. I understand that the property has been converted from offices back to housing, but as the roof alterations have not taken place, I have dealt with the scheme as a proposal, rather than as the retention of existing development.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the terrace, and the area.

Reasons

5. The host sits at the end of a short two storey terrace, whose form, style, detailing and materials present a coherent appearance in the streetscene, and which is broadly consistent with other nearby terraces on this side of Gressenhall Road. It finishes with a hipped roof at each end, which is also typical of nearby terraced properties, other than No 75 whose roof has been extended to form a gable, and which also has a large rear dormer.

6. Amongst other things, the Wandsworth Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2016 ('SPD') advises at pages 81 to 82 that a hip to gable roof extension should be avoided where it would spoil a harmonious and consistent roofscape, where hipped roofs are a characteristic feature. It continues that dormers should appear as new space within a roof, rather than as another full-blown storey, which can make the property look top-heavy.
7. Given that both ends of this terrace end with a hip, the proposed gable would unbalance its appearance in the streetscene. Additionally, the scheme would include a rear dormer which, although set down from the ridge and up from the eaves, would cover most of the extended roof, and would not be set in from the new flank wall. As a consequence, the resultant building would end abruptly with a tall, largely unalleviated wall from ground to ridge and including the cheek of the dormer. That would cause a harmful domineering impact which would be visible in the streetscene through the gap next to the lower side wall and the hipped roof on the adjacent terraced property at No 37.
8. In private views to the rear, whilst the proposed dormer would align with, and would reflect the proportions of, the adjacent dormer at No 45, given that it would cover much of the extended roof, it would add to the scheme's bulk and its awkward design. Although No 33 has a rear dormer, it is a mid-terrace property, and its dormer is in a 'mansard' style with a sloping rear face which helps to soften its visual impact.
9. The appellant cites many examples of large rear dormers within a 200 metre radius of the site. However, having regard to cumulative impacts, this proposed hip to gable extension together with the large rear dormer would have a significant bulk, and would give the property a top-heavy appearance, contrary to the SPD. Notwithstanding the development at No 75, the scheme would not reflect the locally distinctive prevailing roof form on nearby terraces on this side of Gressenhall Road. Thus, whilst it would be appropriately finished with tiles and render, it would harm this streetscene.
10. It would therefore conflict with WLP Policy LP1 which, amongst other things, requires the scale, massing and appearance of development to enhance, and relate positively to, the prevailing local character. WLP Policy LP5 applies to existing residential properties. Given the host's current and intended use I consider it relevant to this scheme. The proposal would conflict with its stance that extensions should complement the form of the host building, and that roof extensions which are visible in the streetscene should be sympathetic to its style and in keeping with the locality's character.
11. As evidenced at Appendix 1 of his statement, the appellant considers that the Council's decision was at odds with officer advice, and with other decisions it has made. I also note that the scheme was amended, in line with an officer suggestion, to align the proposed gable and dormer with the wall beneath.
12. Be that as it may, I have dealt with the scheme before me on its planning merits. For the above reasons, I conclude that it would harm the character and appearance of the host property, the terrace and this streetscene. Having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR