



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2024

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5390/D/24/3337610
23 Flanchford Road, London, W12 9ND

- 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 Angus Michie against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.
 - The application Ref 2023/02406/FUL, dated 15 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of an additional floor in the form of a hipped, pitched roof to the existing single-storey garage to the side of the main building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application form describes the proposal as a 'new hipped pitched roof above existing garage providing some residential storage'. However, the submitted plans indicate that the space created by the proposed development would be a dressing room attached to the front bedroom. On this basis, I consider that the space would be ancillary living accommodation to the first-floor bedroom, and that the description of the proposal as written on the decision notice is more accurate. I have, therefore, used that description in the panel above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider Ravenscourt and Starch Green Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. No 23 is a semi-detached house situated on the south-western side of Flanchford Road. At this point the road turns from a generally north-south direction to an east-west direction and, as a consequence, Nos 25 and 27 are angled away from Nos 21 and 23. This results in a much wider gap between the two sets of semi-detached houses than is apparent along most of the rest of the road. Nos 23 and 25 have had garages built within this gap such that, at ground floor level, the gap is filled. In addition to the garage, it would appear that No 23 has been extended to the side/rear with single-storey additions, and there are also side dormer and rear dormer extensions in the roof space.

5. The proposed development would involve the construction of additional space above the existing garage. It would project upwards to a point just below the existing eaves of the house and would have a partial 'mansard-style' roof sloping steeply away from the front and side elevations and rising vertically at the rear. From the submitted plans, it would appear that the additional space would be connected to the front bedroom to provide a dressing room.
6. Policy DC1 of the Council's Local Plan (LP) indicates that all development should create a high quality urban environment that respects and enhances its townscape context and heritage assets. Policy DC4 indicates that alterations and extensions to existing buildings should be compatible with the scale and character of existing development, neighbouring properties and their setting; successfully integrated into the architectural design of the existing building; and should never dominate the parent building in bulk, scale, or design. Policy DC8 indicates that the Council will conserve the significance of the borough's historic environment by protecting, restoring and enhancing its heritage assets, and that particular regard will be given to matters of scale, height, massing, and alignment.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Key Principles, (SPD) indicates that extensions and alterations in conservation areas should be sympathetic to the architectural character of the built context and should not be harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Characteristics such as building heights, roof forms and side extensions should be considered in this context.
8. The Council contends that the proposed development would have a negative and dominant impact on the character of the dwelling house and a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the CA. It would result in an unacceptable visual impact associated with the scale and massing of the proposed addition above the garage, which would disrupt the open character of the streetscene. It is considered to be of an incoherent and clumsy design which fails to be sufficiently subservient to the original property.
9. The appellant contends that the roof of the extension would sit below the eaves of the main house, and that it would rake back from the building line, such that it would be neither negative nor dominant to the character of the house. Moreover, it would not visibly affect the style, rhythm and massing of the house when seen from the street and would be subservient to it. In addition, the appellant notes the existence of a number of garages and side extensions along the adjacent Hartswood Road, and a small new dwelling (No 29) adjacent to No 27 that was granted permission recently on appeal.
10. Flanchford Road is typified by rows of semi-detached houses with narrow gaps between. However, at the northern end of the road the houses on its southern side exhibit a more open nature, partly due to the wider angle between the pairs and partly because of the large gap created by the rear garden to No 24 Hartswood Road. This greater openness is a positive feature of the road. The gap between Nos 23 and 25 is filled at ground floor level by the adjoining garages, but the openness is retained in the space above. This space would be partly filled by the proposed extension above the garage at the appeal property.
11. I acknowledge that the visual impact of the proposed extension would be ameliorated to a small extent by the sloping nature of the front and side

elevations. However, this would be of a minor nature and would, in any case, result in a somewhat incongruous design that would not integrate well with the design of the main house. It would not conform to existing roof pitch and styles and would not respond well to the architectural context of its immediate surroundings.

12. In addition to the above, the extension would add to the mass of the original house which already has extensions to the side – behind the garage – and to the rear, and which also has dormer roof extensions. This addition would result in the overall extensions to the house dominating the original dwelling, such that they would not appear subservient.
13. I note the existence of garages and extensions to certain houses along the nearby Hartswood Road. However, the context of the design of the properties and the relationship between buildings is somewhat different here, including the existence of a greater number of wider gaps between properties, particularly at first floor level, and especially in close proximity to the junction with Flanchford Road. I also note the new dwelling at No 29 Flanchford Road which apparently replaces an earlier garage on the site. Again, the context is different in that this dwelling is at the end of the row of houses on this side of the road and is bordered by the substantial rear garden of No 24 Hartswood Road, which ensures the retention of a degree of openness.
14. In conclusion, I find that the proposed extension would not be sympathetic to the architectural character of the built context of the host property or its immediate surroundings on Flanchford Road. On this basis, it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area, albeit to a limited extent. Whilst this harm would be less than substantial, there are no public benefits to outweigh the harm. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with Policies DC1, DC4 and DC8 of the LP, and with key principles in the SPD. Accordingly, I dismiss the appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR