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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2024

**by C Skelly BA (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 8 July 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/23/3336163**

**1 & 1A Herbert Road, London SE18 3TB**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Richard Schwartz against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
  - The application Ref is 23/3025/F.
  - The development proposed is subdivision of ground floor commercial unit into two commercial units (Use Class E) and erection of mansard roof, alterations to shopfront.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host properties, the terrace, and the significance of the locally listed buildings at No 26 and 28 Plumstead Common Road.

## Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a pair of two-storey properties with a retail unit at ground floor level and residential above. Herbert Road is characterised by a number of retail terraces of differing architectural styles and is surrounded by residential areas.
4. No 1 and 1A is part of a wider terrace that shares the same decorative parapet wall running to the front of a butterfly roof. This arrangement gives it a distinctive, balanced appearance. The commercial properties on the opposite side of Herbert Road are single storey with flat roofs of much simpler design and therefore the appeal site and the wider terrace are prominent within the street scene.
5. There is a gap in the first storey level of the building line between No 1 Herbert Road and No 24 Plumstead Common Road, which wraps around the corner of the street and is attached to No 26. This group of buildings are of the same height and have a similar parapet wall design at roof level so appear as a cohesive group. Both No 26 and its neighbour No 28 are locally listed Georgian properties. The rear outrigger of No 26 can be seen through the gap between 1 Herbert Road and 24 Plumstead Common Road.
6. The proposed development is for the subdivision of the ground floor commercial unit into two commercial units (Use Class E), alteration to the shop front and erection of a mansard to create additional bedrooms. The mansard

roof would sit behind the decorative parapet, have four window openings to the front elevation and would be clad in dark grey.

7. Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) (LP) supports optimising site capacity, however it recognises that proposals should enhance and utilise their heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards local character.
8. Policy DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) (CS) requires all new roof extensions to respect the scale and character of the host building and the street scene. The Royal Borough of Greenwich Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD) provides further details and says that mansard extensions will be refused where they are not an already established character.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to examples of mansard roofs at 29 Herbert Road and 28, 34, 36 and 38 Plumstead Common Road. Despite the presence of these mansard roofs, they are not a common feature and they do not form part of the established character of the local area.
10. The proposed mansard roof would not be visible when viewed immediately to the front of the property, but it would appear prominent and incongruous when viewed from across the road or further along Herbert Road. Although it would be stepped back from the parapet wall, its height and materials would detract from the distinctive character of the host properties. The proposal would unbalance the appearance of the terrace and its relationship with the adjacent properties 1b and 1c harming the character of the wider street scene.
11. The properties at 26 and 28 Plumstead Common Road are locally listed and adjoin the appeal site. The significance of the locally listed buildings at 26 and 28 Plumstead Common Road is derived from their form, relationship to neighbours and in their contributions to the understanding of area. Moreover, I have explained above how they have similar architectural detailing to the appeal property. The height and design of the proposed mansard would therefore erode the cohesive appearance of this group of buildings thereby harming their significance.
12. For the reasons outlined above I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host properties, the terrace and the wider street scene, thereby conflicting with Policy D3 of the LP which requires development to respect and enhance architectural features that contribute towards local character; Policy DH1 of the CS which requires development to provide a positive relationship between the proposed and existing urban context, in addition to the guidance in the SPD relating to mansard extensions.
13. The proposal would also harm the significance of the locally listed buildings at No 26 and 28 Plumstead Common Road, consequently it would conflict with Policy HC1 of the LP which requires development to be sympathetic to the heritage assets' significance and policy DH3 and DH(j) of the CS which seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and give substantial weight to protecting and conserving the particular characteristics that account for the designation of locally listed buildings.

## **Planning Balance and Conclusion**

14. I acknowledge that the proposal would create additional bedroom space, improve the internal layout of the properties and continue the use of the retail

unit. It would also be designed with high U-values and eco-friendly materials and comply with current Building Regulations. I also note that there are no concerns in relation to the loss of privacy of neighbouring occupiers nor the subdivision of the retail unit. However, the harm identified to the character and appearance of the host properties, the terrace, wider street scene and adjacent locally listed buildings would be of greater consequence.

15. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
16. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

*C Skelly*

INSPECTOR