



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 July 2024

by C Skelly BA (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/W/24/3339229

4 Edbrooke Road, Flat 3, London W9 2DF

- 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 Sacha Kester against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/08205/FULL.
 - The development proposed is erection of a mansard roof extension at third floor level and associated works. Proposal has been designed to match the applications at No 30 and No 34, which was approved on appeal.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Between the deadline for final comments and the issuing of this decision, the Secretary of State has issued a Written Ministerial Statement entitled "Building the homes we need", and a consultation has begun on the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I have sought views from both the Council and the appellant on the relevance of this to the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is one of a pair of three-storey properties, with basements, located on the end of a long residential terrace. The property is a mix of brick with white render on the ground floor. The host property shares a number of architectural features with No 2, including window profiles and a stone canopy with three pillars. Although there are some minor differences in the detailed design of the properties, they have a broadly symmetrical appearance. The property is currently subdivided into flats.
5. Adjacent to the property is a more modern block of flats, which appears as an unusual infill between the host property and the remaining terrace. The majority of properties along the wider terrace have butterfly roofs, with parapet walls in front. There are a few examples of mansard roofs located further along Edbrooke Road. However, they do not form a key characteristic of the area.

6. The proposal is for the erection of a mansard roof extension, which would provide two further bedrooms and a bathroom to one of the flats. The proposal would include 2 windows to both the front and rear elevations and would be clad in natural slate. Proposed changes also include raising of the party walls and chimneys.
7. Policy 40E of the Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 (2021) (LP) says that appropriately designed roof extensions will be supported where they do not impact adversely on heritage assets and should, where part of a terrace or group already characterised by roof additions or alterations, be of appropriate design which follows an established form and would help to unify the architectural character of the existing terrace or a group.
8. The "Roofs - A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings" Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004) (SPG) says that roof extensions would not normally be acceptable in the case of an unbroken run of butterfly roofs, or where the existing roofline is largely unimpaired by any alterations.
9. Paragraph 124 (e) of the Framework supports mansard roof extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and where the overall street-scene, is well-designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards) and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers. Although the current consultation on the Framework proposes the removal of the reference to the height of any proposed mansard the overall aim of the paragraph would remain unchanged.
10. The host property and No 2 are segregated from the wider street by the modern block of flats and therefore appear as a symmetrical pair, rather than a longer terrace. The proposal would remove this symmetry and harm the appearance of this pair of properties, which lie in isolation from the wider terrace. The proposal would appear particularly prominent due to the lower height of the adjacent block of flats and would be visible further along the street and from the higher floors of neighbouring properties. I recognise that the roofscape has already been broken by the adjacent block of flats, however the proposal would further disrupt the appearance of the roofscape, leading to a visually discordant end to the terrace.
11. I noted on my site visit that butterfly roofs are a key characteristic of the local area and although this feature of the host property is not visible from Edbrooke Road, it can be glimpsed through gaps in the built form from Oakington Road. The proposed mansard would lead to the loss of the butterfly roof arrangement and, despite its consistency along the wider terrace already being broken by the block of flats, would further erode this important local feature.
12. My attention has been drawn to other examples of similar development further along the street. I do not have the plans or other details in front of me and therefore cannot be sure that they are directly comparable to this one. Nevertheless, although there is a particular cluster of mansards along this more central part of the terrace, the appeal site does not read as part of this being physically separated by the block of flats and therefore these cases are different to that before me.
13. Consequently, the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Accordingly, it would conflict with Policies 38 and 40 of the LP and the SPG which seek amongst other things to ensure new development provides high quality, sustainable and inclusive design which responds to local context. In addition, the proposal would also conflict with paragraph 135 of the Framework which seeks to ensure that new developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment.

14. I note that the proposal would provide additional and improved living accommodation in terms of space and sustainability for the appellant and his family. However, this does not outweigh the significant harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

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