



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2024

by C Cresswell BSc (Hons) MA, MBA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/24/3346345

23 Drakefield Road, Wandsworth, London, SW17 8RT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Angela Martin against the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/0345.
 - The development proposed is described as “demolition of existing two storey property and erection of two storey single family dwelling house with basement and loft accommodation”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Revised plans were submitted during the appeal process which propose building two residential units rather than the single dwelling shown on the original planning application. This essentially involves changes to the internal configuration of the building and so would have little effect on its external appearance. Nonetheless, the increase from one residential unit to two units changes the nature of the proposal. If I were to determine the appeal on the basis of the revised plans, there would be a risk that parties wishing to comment on the modified development would be deprived of the opportunity to do so. In the interests of fairness, I have therefore based my decision on the development as it was originally proposed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Heaver Estate Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. This part of Drakefield Road is characterised by Victorian terraced housing interspersed with terraces of more contemporary style housing. The Victorian terraces have a very similar appearance, providing a strong sense of uniformity to the street scene. Although the more contemporary terraces have a different appearance to the Victorian housing, they also display a strong sense of visual consistency along their length. Drakefield Road forms part of the Heaver Estate Conservation Area, the significance of which is mainly derived from the architectural quality of the streets and terraces.

5. The appeal concerns a contemporary style property. It is situated at the end of its terrace immediately next to a terrace of Victorian properties. As the appeal property is lower in height and of a very different architectural style to the neighbouring Victorian dwelling (No 21 Drakefield Road) there is a marked difference between the appearance of the two dwellings.
6. In contrast, the proposed replacement dwelling would mimic the appearance of No 21 and the other Victorian dwellings in the street. It would close the gap between the appeal property and No 21, joining the end of the existing Victorian terrace and effectively lengthening it. The new dwelling would match the ridge height of the other properties in the terrace and would reflect their traditional design, materials, and general detailing.
7. The rear elevation of the proposed dwelling would incorporate some relatively large rear projections and so would deviate from the appearance of No 21 and the adjoining Victorian dwellings. However, there is less consistency at the rear of the terrace and it is not as visually exposed as the Drakefield Road frontage. As such, this aspect of the proposal would have little effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. The part of the proposed dwelling adjoining No 25 would be recessed back from the Drakefield Road street frontage and would close the gap between the two terraces. Although there are some other properties in Drakefield Road with similar recessed features, they are mainly seen adjoining other dwellings of comparable height. As No 25 is a smaller, contemporary-style dwelling, the side profile of the proposed dwelling would be widely exposed in the street scene and would loom high over the roof of its neighbour.
9. At present, the side profile of No 21 is seen at the end of the Victorian terrace. This has a relatively simple, sloping roof consistent with other properties in this part of the street. However, the proposed dwelling would have a more complex, angular shape due to the recessed area to the side. This would be at odds with the simple, consistent appearance of the street scene.
10. While the front elevation of the proposed dwelling would be a close match to the Victorian terrace, it would not replicate its design exactly as the front doorway arch would be slimmer than its neighbour at No 21. The windows would also be more closely grouped. This would have the effect of making the frontage of the new property appear somewhat narrower than the Victorian properties it would adjoin. While these design differences are relatively subtle, they would be viewed alongside the irregular side profile of the proposed dwelling. The combined effect would be to draw undue attention to the property as a modern addition to an older terrace.
11. The proposal would therefore have a harmful effect on the qualities of the Conservation Area. While the level of harm would be less than substantial, the public benefits of the development (including a small increase in housing capacity and the economic gain during the construction phase) are relatively limited. As such, they are not sufficient to outweigh the 'great weight' which the Framework assigns to the protection of heritage assets.

Conclusion

12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Heaver Estate Conservation Area. There

would be conflict with Policy HC1 of the London Plan¹ and policies LP1 and LP3 of the Local Plan². Amongst other things, these policies seek to protect the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

C Cresswell

INSPECTOR

¹ The London Plan 2021, Mayor of London.

² Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038.