



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3353421

8 Victoria Mews, Wandsworth, London, SW18 3PY

- 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 Mrs Sophia Leeder against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/2181.
 - The development proposed is ground floor rear extension, side extension to house and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised in December 2024. As the changes do not materially affect the main issues in this case, the parties have not been invited to make further comments. Where reference is made to the Framework in this decision, the paragraph numbers are those that appear in the latest version.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and on the Magdalen Park Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The Magdalen Park Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) identifies that the special quality of the CA derives from the architectural and historic merit of two formally laid-out, well-preserved, suburban Council housing estates built around 1933: the Fieldview and Openview Estates. Its special character is manifest in the formal arrangement of the townscape layout, and the consistent appearance of component buildings.
5. The appeal property is a modern 1990's built detached house which sits as a pair with 7 Victoria Mews and forms part of a small estate arranged in a triangular pattern around a central green. Houses within the estate vary in size and type but follow a consistent pattern and share design features resulting in a well-planned, coherent appearance to the development. The estate is not readily visible from the adjacent roads, and the CAA identifies Victoria Mews as

making a neutral contribution to the CA. From my assessment of the site and its surroundings, I concur with this view.

6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Similar advice is contained within the Framework and Policy LP3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023 (WLP).
7. Policy LP1 of the WLP seeks a design led approach where (amongst other matters) the scale, massing and appearance of the development provide a high-quality, sustainable design and layout that enhance and relate positively to the prevailing local character. Policy LP5 of the WLP supports proposals for extensions and alterations to existing properties where (amongst other things) the proposal respects and/or complements the form, setting, period and detailing of the host building, uses matching or complementary materials, and would be visually subservient to it.
8. The appeal property is sited within a plot which is significantly larger than most of those associated with the houses in Victoria Mews. It is not prominently sited as it occupies a corner plot with its main front elevation facing towards the flank elevation of 9 Victoria Mews. However, its balanced appearance and siting with No 7 is evident in the street scene.
9. The proposed two storey side extension would have a width of around 3.35m and a small set back from the front elevation of the dwelling of about 0.9m. However, its eaves and ridge height would be equivalent to that of the host dwelling. Despite the small set back from the front elevation, the two storey extension would be highly dominant and would not be read as a subservient addition to the host dwelling due to its size and scale, and particularly its equivalent height. Whilst the extension would not be unduly prominent in the street scene due to its siting whereby it would be partially screened by No 9, it would nonetheless represent a dominant and overbearing extension which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and accordingly would upset the balance and coherence of the CA within which it sits.
10. I have had regard to the approved (but not implemented) extensions at 7 Victoria Mews (LPA ref. 2003/1734) however I note from the details provided that the two-storey extension was proposed to be set back from the front elevation of the dwelling by 1.2m and had a lower ridge height than the host dwelling. Accordingly, it was considered by the Council to be a subordinate addition to the dwelling.
11. The proposed dormer windows on the rear elevation would be large and would span across much of the combined width of the existing dwelling and the proposed two storey extension. Despite a small gap between the two dormers, they would represent a highly dominant, bulky addition to the roof which would overwhelm the rear elevation of the dwelling. The dormer closest to the eastern side would span the roof slope of the original dwelling and the proposed extension to the side and accordingly, there would be no visual differentiation between the original and extended elements of the dwelling. Furthermore, the proposed solar panels would add considerably to the bulk of the dormers, adding a further 0.4m in height. The proposed dormers would therefore be

overly large and dominant and consequently, would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the CA.

12. The appellant has highlighted examples of metal clad dormer windows and solar panels that have been approved in Victoria Mews, most notably at Nos 26 and 29. Whilst I agree that the approved dormers in both cases were relatively large, from the information before me, they appear more proportionate in scale to the host dwelling than the combined effect of the two dormers proposed at No 8.
13. The proposed single storey side and rear extensions incorporate a flat roof design and as individual elements, would be subservient in size and scale to the host dwelling and would not result in any harm to its character and appearance or that of the CA. Similarly, if the two storey extension had been found to be appropriate in all other respects, the front dormer window would be of an appropriate scale.
14. In conclusion, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Given the relatively small scale of the proposal, this harm would be less than substantial harm. Paragraph 215 of the Framework indicates that in such circumstances the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. There are no public benefits in this case.
15. In addition to the conflict with national policy and legislation identified above, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies LP1, LP3 and LP5 of the WLP and the Council's Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2016). Together these policies and guidance seek to protect the district's heritage assets and (amongst other things) to ensure that developments provide a high-quality design that contributes positively to local character.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, having regard to the development plan and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR