



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2025

by K Savage BA(Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/24/3353879

37 Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, London E11 2RQ

- 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 Ms Penny Malhotra against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application reference is 1777/24.
 - The development proposed is a dormer to rear roof slope and conservation rooflights to front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a dormer to rear roof slope and conservation rooflights to front roof slope, at 37 Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, London E11 2RQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 1777/24, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawing numbers: 1416/472/LP (Location and Block Plan); 1416/472-L01 (Existing and proposed plans for a loft conversion).
 - 3) Unless otherwise specified on the approved plans, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. On 12 December 2024, an updated National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published, replacing the version from December 2023. I have had regard to this as an important material consideration.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Wanstead Village Conservation Area (WVCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two storey mid-terrace dwelling forming part of a curved row fronting onto Christ Church Green, within the WVCA. The significance of the WVCA arises from its well-maintained village character, centred around three historic village green spaces connected on one side by the bustling main thoroughfare of High Street/The Green/St Mary's Avenue, with a significant amount of historic architecture retained. Spratt Hall Road stands to the opposite

side of the green from High Street, framing the green space on this side and forming the western boundary of the conservation area. I observed the well-maintained and consistent front elevations of the terrace which contribute very positively to the appearance of the area and the retained, historic village character in unison with the green and the notable listed Christ Church standing at its centre.

5. The dormer would be set below the main ridge line by 150mm and above the eaves by some 220mm, but in spanning the full width of the rear roof slope, it would be contrary to the Council's Housing Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (the HDG) which requires dormers to be inset from the sides of the roof by one metre. I understand a smaller dormer meeting these requirements was granted planning permission in 2024¹, and remains extant as a fall-back position for the appellant.
6. The proposed dormer, being on the roof slope, would not alter the front elevation of the dwelling and would have no effect on the vistas experienced on Spratt Hall Road or within the green space, nor would it affect views to and from the church. The front rooflights would be modest additions that would not demonstrably alter the overall form or character of the building. In these respects, the proposal would not harm the qualities of the immediate surroundings that contribute to the character and appearance of the WVCA.
7. The proposal would instead be experienced from properties to the rear and from a small stretch of Chaucer Road where the rear roofline of Spratt Hall Road is visible. There are already several examples of rear dormer windows along the terrace roofline, including a prominent example at the end-of-terrace property (No 41) and a deep extension over the rear wing at No 35. In this context, the proposed dormer would not be a wholly isolated addition. Indeed, imagery provided by the appellant suggests around a dozen of the 41 dwellings in the terrace have a rear dormer, and the Council has already accepted the principle of a roof addition through the aforementioned planning permission.
8. The rear roof slope of the appeal dwelling is recessed slightly from that of No 38 next door and is partially screened by the parapet wall. This would reduce the extent to which the dormer would visibly project out from the general roofline of the terrace. Moreover, the dormer would sit well back behind the rear outrigger of the dwelling which would reduce its prominence in views from neighbouring gardens to either side and behind and would mitigate against the dwelling appearing top heavy or overbearing in scale relative to others in the terrace.
9. The opposing terrace of Addison Road also has a considerable number of larger, full-width rear dormer additions. Although these lie outside of the conservation area, they form part of the immediate context of the proposal, particularly as the views experienced from within the rear gardens of both terraces are contained and do not take in the wider WVCA or the key features which contribute to its heritage significance. Consequently, whilst acknowledging the guidance of the HDG, I find that the rear dormer would not undermine the contribution of the host dwelling to the character and appearance of the wider terrace and in turn the contribution of the terrace to the significance of the WVCA.

¹ Council Ref 0914/24

10. I am referred to two appeal decisions, one from 2019² where a dormer was permitted, and a second from 2022³ where one was refused. I do not have the full decision letters before me in evidence, nor other particulars of either scheme to ascertain whether they are directly comparable. They relate however to dwellings at the far end of the terrace and not within the same immediate vistas as the appeal site, and whilst noting the Inspectors' comments quoted to me, I have based my assessment on the specific merits of the case and my own observations of the site and its surroundings.
11. For the reasons set out, I conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the WVCA. No conflict therefore arises with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan (March 2018) or Policy HC1 of the London Plan (March 2021), which together require development to achieve high quality design which respects the local character of the area; and to conserve, protect and enhance designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their special interest, character or appearance and significance.

Conclusion

12. I conclude that the proposal would accord with the development plan, taken as a whole, and there are no material considerations which indicate that permission should nevertheless be withheld. Therefore, the appeal should be allowed, subject to a condition requiring development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, to provide certainty. A condition requiring materials to match the existing building is also necessary to ensure a satisfactory appearance.

K Savage

INSPECTOR

² APP/W5780/D/19/3220430 – 6 Spratt Hall Road

³ APP/W5780/D/22/3296876 – 9 Spratt Hall Road