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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2012

**by Ian Radcliffe BSC (Hons) MCIEH DMS**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 2 November 2012**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/A/12/2177582**  
**6 South Hill Park, London NW3 2SB**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Grainger Plc against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
  - The application Ref 2012/0087/P, dated 5 January 2012, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2012.
  - The development proposed is a loft conversion to create additional space for a second floor flat.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the South Hill Park Conservation Area.

## Reasons

3. Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') advises, amongst other matters, that the conservation of the historic environment can bring wide social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. It also identifies that heritage assets are irreplaceable resources. Paragraph 132 advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a Conservation Area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
4. Policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy and policy DP25 of Camden's Development Policies seek to conserve heritage assets and designated built environments. These policies are therefore consistent with the Framework and I attach full weight to them.
5. The South Hill Conservation Area Statement is supplementary planning guidance that has been adopted following public consultation. I therefore attach significant weight to it in my consideration of this appeal. In respect of applications for the conversion of roof spaces the Statement includes guidelines for roof extensions. These include that an extension to a roof space should respect the integrity of the existing roof form (SHP15) and that where a cluster of roofs remain largely unimpaired dormers at the front will not be allowed (SHP16).

6. No 6 is located within a terrace of 7 properties attached to a public house at the bottom of South Hill Park. The terrace has a plain faced Georgian facade with a continuous parapet wall and low roof form behind. The proposed conversion would result in a far bulkier mansard roof to the front elevation than the existing single pitch roof slope. This would detract from the distinctive appearance of the majority of the terrace (Nos 6 – 14) whose original roof form to the front remains intact. The introduction of a pair of dormer windows within the front elevation would accentuate these differences by drawing attention to the roof.
7. Whilst I appreciate that No 4 was recently granted planning permission for a similar mansard roof, the officer report identified it would infill a gap between the mansard roof at No 2 and the higher parapet of No 6. As a result, the conversion has equalised out differences in the appearance and height of the roof. In contrast, the appeal proposal in extending the mansard roof and dormer windows northwards along the terrace would erode to an unacceptable degree the continuous low unadorned roof form that is a predominant characteristic of this simple well balanced terrace. As a consequence, the proposal would be contrary to Camden's Planning Guidance Note 1 which seeks to prevent such harm. It would also be contrary to the guidance contained within the South Hill Conservation Area Statement, which I have referred to in paragraph 5, which seeks to preserve the special interest of the area.
8. To the rear a more varied roof form exists with No 6 isolated between neighbouring mansard roofs, tall dormer windows, balconies and roof terraces. As a consequence, the simple roof form of the roof between Nos 2 and 10 where these alterations have occurred has been lost. The rear of the terrace, and particularly No 6, is largely hidden from public view with only glimpses possible from Hampstead Heath and steeply angled views from the courtyard of the Doctors surgery below. As a result, the mansard roof, its windows and roof terrace would complement the character and appearance of surrounding development which is largely hidden from public and private view.
9. I have come to different conclusions in relation to the front and rear roofs of the building. However, as the living space that would be created would be functionally connected a split decision is not appropriate in this instance.
10. For the reasons given I therefore conclude that the proposal in harming the character and appearance of the front roof of No 6 and the front roofs of the terrace would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the South Hill Conservation Area. As a result it would be contrary to policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy and policies DP24 and DP25 of Camden's Development Policies. Policy DP24 requires the protection of the character and appearance of a locality through high quality design that respects local design features. It would also be contrary to the supplementary planning guidance contained within The South Hill Conservation Area Statement.

*Ian Radcliffe*

Inspector