



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 July 2012

by David Warden MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 August 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/12/2176796

23 Cliff Villas, London NW1 9AT

- 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 Mr and Mrs Anderson against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2012/0465/P was refused by notice dated 15 March 2012.
 - The development proposed is a second and third floor extension to an existing semi-detached property on Cliff Villas.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') was recently published, at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. I have had regard to it in reaching my decision.

Main Issue

3. The Council raise no issue in respect of the living conditions of nearby residents, having regard to the features of the proposal, I find no reason to disagree. The main issue in this case, therefore, is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a wedge shaped piece of land between a petrol station and No 22 Cliff Villas. The latter is a large, attractive Victorian building with stuccoed bays and quoins. The appeal building, which is attached to the side of No 22, is an unusual mix of styles, with a rather patchwork appearance. Due to their siting at a junction and the position/layout of the adjoining buildings and streets, both the appeal property and No 22 are prominent. Whilst the appeal building is not listed or within a Conservation Area, the properties on the opposite side of Camden Park Road are within the Camden Square Conservation Area. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and shows some variation in building age and style.
 5. The proposal would replace the existing second floor mansard and third floor roof lantern with a sheer storey at second floor level and a steeply-pitched mansard roof above, which would be set behind a parapet and with timber sash
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dormers windows. The second floor would follow the profile and design of the existing first floor, with a brick wall to the petrol station side, and white render and cornice detailing to the frontage, along with a decorative panel and extruded piers to match the existing.

6. The Council takes no issue with the principle of the second floor element of the scheme. Notwithstanding that it would not be subordinate to the host property, given the awkward appearance of the existing upper floors, I find no reason to disagree. However, the proposal would obscure the quoins to the flank elevation of No 22. These are the primary detailing to this elevation and are visible from within the adjoining Conservation Area, including from the opposite side of Camden Park Road and the large area of pavement at the top of St. Augustine's Road and Marquis Road. This feature indicates the status of the building within the streetscene and alludes to the rich detailing to the front elevation. The harmful effect of covering the quoins to the side elevation would be compounded by the proposed vertical continuation of the extruded pier to the boundary with this property. Whilst not without merit if considered in isolation, this would, from certain angles, obscure views of even parts of the quoins to the front elevation. For all the positive attributes of the scheme, including greater uniformity, a more balanced appearance and a generally more sympathetic overall design, the harm that would be caused would not be outweighed by these benefits.
7. In respect of the effect of the proposal on the overhanging eaves of No 22, I saw that the existing lantern is attached to the substantial chimney to the side of this adjoining property, but also intrudes somewhat upon its overhanging eaves. Whilst the proposed mansard roof would rise above and conceal these eaves to a greater degree, there would, to my mind, be sufficient eaves left visible to emphasise this positive feature of No 22. Moreover, I find that the benefits of the scheme outlined above would outweigh the loss of visible eaves and, with the exception of the effect on the quoins, the architectural integrity of the adjoining building would not be harmed. Had the appeal been acceptable in all other respects, it would have been necessary to secure more detailed drawings of the junction between the two roofs by condition.
8. All in all, as the proposal would obscure an important architectural feature of the adjoining building, it would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, as well as to the setting of the adjoining Camden Square Conservation Area. This would be contrary to policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy 2010 ('CS'), policies DP24 and DP25 of the Camden Development Policies 2010 ('DP'), and policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2011 ('LP'), as well as guidance in sections 2 and 4 of the Council's SPD¹ and that within the Framework, which seek, amongst other things, to protect local character and distinctiveness.

Other Matters

9. I note that the proposal follows two sets of pre-application advice and that there is support from a local resident. Furthermore, the scheme would result in much improved internal accommodation to the upper floors, which it is clear from the plans are particularly constrained at present. However, these factors,

¹ Camden Planning Guidance 2011 – Design, Supplementary Planning Document.

even when considered alongside the other benefits of the scheme, would not overcome or outweigh the harm identified above.

10. Having regard to the Framework, the CS and DP were adopted in 2010 and the LP dates from 2011. The local policy context is, therefore, relatively up to date. Moreover, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence that would lead me to conclude that, in the context of this appeal, the relevant CS, DP or LP policies are inconsistent with the Framework. Therefore, whilst the policies in the Framework have been considered, in light of the facts in this case, they do not alter my overall conclusion.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Warden

INSPECTOR