



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 September 2007

by **Jim Metcalf** BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

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Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/A/07/2042718

9 Gayton Crescent, Hampstead, London, NW3 1TT

- 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 James Tyler against the decision of the London Borough of Camden Council.
- The application (Ref 2006/3343/P), dated 19 July 2006, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2006.
- The development proposed is the alteration to roof to form side, rear and front dormer together with roof terrace.

Decision

I dismiss the appeal.

Main issue

I consider the main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Reasons

Nos 1-15 Gayton Crescent are identified in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (CAS) as buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance to the Conservation Area. The buildings, including No 9 Gayton Crescent, are imposing, three storey, semi-detached houses with a consistency of shape, design and materials that create the attractive streetscape identified in the CAS. The houses have prominent slate, hipped roofs with a central chimney stack. Some, including the appeal property, have rooms in the roof space, normally served by roof lights. Although some houses in the general area do have dormers they are not a common feature on the houses along this side of Gayton Crescent.

The dormers proposed in the front and side of the roof would be very prominent in the view on the approach to the house from Willow Road. They would interrupt the clean lines of the roof and be poorly related to the façades below. Each dormer would, of itself, be a large incongruous feature that would detract from the symmetry and shape of the roof. This would be further emphasised by the introduction, in close proximity of dormers on both the front and side roof slope of the house.

At the rear the proposed dormer, with a railed terrace area in front, would effectively completely replace the existing roof slope in clear conflict with the advice set down in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), adopted in 2001, regarding roofs and terraces. SPG makes it clear that in Conservation Areas care will be needed with regard to the position and size of dormers in the rear elevation.

The appellant has pointed out a number of roof alterations in the area that he considers comparable to his proposal. However, the CAS clearly explains that the character and appearance of the conservation area has been eroded by, amongst other things, insensitive alterations to the roofs including intrusive dormers. In these circumstances I would not regard some of the other alterations to roofs as a precedent that would justify the granting of permission in this case. The Council point out that some of the dormers mentioned were constructed without the need for planning permissions, when the regulations were more generous in this respect. They also point out that planning permission was not granted for a dormer at the front of No 2 Gayton Crescent as suggested by the appellant. The schemes approved at the appeal property for roof alterations in 1998 and 2007 are not comparable in scale and design with the appeal scheme.

I note that the appellant has suggested that the three dormer windows proposed should each be considered separately. However, they all form part of a comprehensive scheme to enlarge the living accommodation in the roof space and as such are not clearly physically and functionally independent. Consequently I have considered the scheme as a whole rather than as a collection of parts.

The CAS states that roof extensions are unlikely to be acceptable where they would be detrimental to the form and character of the existing building or where the building forms part of a symmetrical composition, where the roof is prominent, particularly in long views and the property forms part of a group or terrace which remains largely but not necessarily completely unimpaired. I have no doubt that these constraints properly apply in this case.

I conclude that the scale and design of the work proposed to the roof, on all three sides, would significantly detract from the character and appearance of No 9 Gayton Crescent and the local street scene and consequently fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Hampstead Conservation Area. This would be contrary to Policies B1, B3 and B7 of the Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006, CAS and SPG. Accordingly I dismiss the appeal.

Jim Metcalf

INSPECTOR