



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 February 2013

by Ava Wood Dip Arch MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 February 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/13/2190822
38 South Hill Park, LONDON NW3 2SJ

- 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 David Ponte against the decision of London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref: 2012/4771/P was refused by notice dated 2 November 2012.
 - The development proposed is erection of a rear full width, single storey ground floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The decision notice cites Policy CS14 from the Core Strategy¹, and Policies DP24 and DP25 Development Policies². These are consistent with the thrust of policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) aiming for high quality designs, respect for context and conserving the historic environment. I give them the full weight, as advised in paragraph 214 of the Framework.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect the proposal would have on the appearance of the appeal dwelling and the terrace, and on the character and appearance of the South Hill Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling forms part of a group of terraced dwellings numbered 36-42. The terrace is positioned towards the southern end of the looped street layout of the conservation area, comprising late C19 terraces and semi-detached villas. The property is positioned on the west side of South Hill Park with wide views from its rear over Hampstead Heath and No.1 Pond. The terraces and semi-detached villas on the west side of South Hill Park form an almost continuous wall of buildings which, because of their height and numbers, are very visible from the Heath and from the opposite bank of the pond. Views of the appeal property are somewhat filtered by trees and vegetation, but its façade is visible nonetheless.

¹ London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy

² London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies

5. The proposed development is to be built off the existing lower ground floor extension which extends across the full width of the building's rear elevation. The new extension would be contained by the flank wall of the part width extension at the rear of No.36 and party wall to No.40. A set back from the rear wall of the existing extension is also shown on the drawings. Nevertheless, the new extension would similarly occupy the full width of the rear elevation up to first floor level.
6. The existing and proposed extensions would overwhelm the original building by virtue of their combined bulk and height. The lightweight construction would do little to overcome the dominating impact of what would essentially represent another addition to the property. Because of its height and extent to which it would cover the rear face of the main building, the extension could not be described as subservient to it.
7. The grounds of appeal correctly point to the variety of elevational treatments on the terraces and houses backing onto No.1 Pond. The rear facades of Nos.36-42, however, exhibit a remarkable uniformity, due mostly to the absence of full width extensions above lower ground floor level. The same applies to the adjacent block (Nos.44-46). The proposal would disrupt that unity and general rhythm of the terrace.
8. The Conservation Area Statement refers to the elaborate detailing being generally limited to the front elevation of buildings in this part of the conservation area, but also describes the simple detailing on the rear and flank facades. I agree there are many examples of rear facades being altered and extended in a variety of different designs, but the buildings in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property have not been altered to the same extent. The simplicity and uniformity of this short terrace is a distinctive feature, visible from a number of viewpoints and contributing positively to the appearance of the conservation area. While the character of the area is unlikely to be altered by the proposed extension, its construction would mark a departure from the prevailing pattern of rear elevations remaining largely uninterrupted by extensions at upper levels. The effect would be visible in views from the west, and to the detriment of the appearance of the conservation area.
9. The lawfulness of replacing the existing bay window and door at ground floor level with full width sliding doors has little bearing on the merits of the appeal proposal. The sliding doors would be installed in the wall projecting some 2.3m from the back of the building, instead of remaining flush to the original wall. The two circumstances are visually very different.
10. Having identified the harm that the proposal would cause to the appeal building, to the terrace and the appearance of the conservation area, so it follows that it would not accord with the requirements of the policies referred to earlier. Furthermore, the harm caused to the significance of the conservation area would not be overcome by any countervailing benefits. I have taken account of all other matters raised, but find nothing to outweigh the balance of my considerations or decision to dismiss the appeal.

Ava Wood

Inspector