
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2015

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 November 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/15/3132754
41 Twisden Road, London NW5 1DL

- 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 Ms Magdalena Cebula against the decision of the London Borough of Camden Council.
 - The application Ref 2015/2088/P, dated 10 April 2015, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2015.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of a dormer window to provide sufficient headroom to access the loft storage space from the existing stairwell.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a dormer window to provide sufficient headroom to access the loft storage space from the existing stairwell at 41 Twisden Road, London NW5 1DL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 2015/2088/P, dated 10 April 2015, 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 approved plans: 15.003.EX00, 15.003.EX01, 15.003.EX02, 15.003.EX03, 15.003.EX04, 15.003.PR01, 15.003.PR02, 15.003.PR03 and 15.003.PR04.
 3. 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.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling; the group of buildings of which it forms part; and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a well conserved three storey house situated within a terrace which is located towards the north western end of Twisden
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Road, close to where it meets Chetwynd Road. The rear gardens along the north eastern side of Twisden Road get increasingly shallow in depth, and taper in along with those serving houses fronting Chetwynd Road behind.

4. The Council's Design Guidance (CPG1) states in paragraph 5.11 that the addition of roof dormers should be sensitive changes which maintain the overall structure of the existing roof form, and that they will generally be considered acceptable, provided that a number of circumstances are met. Whilst I acknowledge that the distance between the roof of the dormer and the ridge of no 41 is slight, it would not cut through the roof ridge, and in combination with its overall scale, it would not result in the creation of a disproportionately large dormer. The dormer has taken design cues from those recently approved at nos 66 and 68 Twisden Road, which were found acceptable by the Council and broadly in accordance with CPG1.
5. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would introduce a dormer where there is a largely unbroken roofscape, views of the specific proposal are likely to be generally restricted to those from above ground floor windows of surrounding residential properties in close range, particularly bearing in mind the close knit relationship with Chetwynd Road. Indeed, I noted three other examples of dormer roof additions on the rear of properties within Chetwynd Road from the first floor landing window of the appeal property. Consequently, whilst I note that dormers are relatively rare in their occurrence within the surrounding area, they are not an unwholly uncharacteristic feature and, in all reality, public views of the proposed dormer would be limited.
6. In number, form, scale and pane size, the dormer and window would adequately relate to the facade below and the surface area of the roof, appearing as a separate modest projection which would be aligned with windows on the lower floors, in compliance with CPG1. I acknowledge that an appeal was dismissed back in 2002 for the insertion of two dormers into the roof space of 49 Twisden Road, however, those dormers proposed were of a significantly greater bulk and were of an appearance that was unsympathetic to the host property.
7. Therefore, whilst I acknowledge that the existing, largely unbroken rear roof line, is part of the established character of the Conservation Area and contributes to its appearance, I consider that the proposed rear dormer window, by reason of its siting and design would not result in a prominent form of development. Consequently, its visual impact upon the host building and within the terrace of which it forms part, would not be visually detrimental, and I find that as a whole the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. The proposal complies with Camden Core Strategy Policies CS5 and CS14, as well as Policies DP24 and DP25 of the Camden Development Policies which, amongst other things, expect developments to consider the character and proportions of existing buildings, where alterations and extensions are proposed, along with the quality of materials to be used; and require high standards of design that respects local context and character, whilst preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets, including Conservation Areas.

Conclusion and Conditions

9. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other issues raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.
10. Other than the standard time limit condition, the Council has suggested a condition requiring the external materials to be used in the construction of the extension to match those of the existing building. In the interests of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, this is an appropriate condition. In addition, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans is imposed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR