
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2017

by B Bowker Mplan MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/17/3179033

Flat 2, 191 Fordwych Road, London NW2 3NH

- 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 Rob McGovern against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2017/1013/P, dated 21 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey extension and alterations to Flat 2, 191 Fordwych Road, London NW2 3NH.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. During the appeal, the Council, within its Statement of Case, confirmed that it has adopted the Camden Local Plan (LP). The parties have had the opportunity to comment on the effect of this matter on the appeal. Accordingly the appeal has been determined taking into account policies of the LP.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached property of Victorian character that has been subdivided into two self-contained flats with a single storey flat roof extension to the rear. The proposed flat roof extension would have an 'L' shaped footprint that would wrap around the two storey pitched roof protection to the rear of the property. Surrounding properties are predominantly semi-detached and similar in character with two storey pitched roof rear projections.
5. The 'L' shaped footprint of the proposal would encompass the rear elevation and part of the side elevation of the two storey pitched roof rear projection. Although set below the existing roof pitch, the footprint proposed combined with the depth, two storey height, mass and flat roof form would not, as a whole, appear subordinate to the existing property or sympathetic to its character.
6. In conjunction with the asymmetrical and bulky form, the use of cedar timber cladding would fail to give the proposal a secondary appearance to the host

building. With reference to the adjoining railway line and intervening boundary fence and vegetation, the proposal would not be prominent from public vantage points. However, the resultant harm of the proposal to the character and appearance of the host building would be noticeable from surrounding properties.

7. In reaching this view, I have taken into account rear alterations and extensions at adjoining properties, some of which I saw during my site visit. However, unlike the proposal before me, when present, the alterations and extensions at adjoining properties are modest in scale and appear secondary to the host building. Consequently the original character of adjoining properties has been retained and thus the wider Victorian character, to which the appeal property contributes, prevails. In this context, whilst each case is dealt with on its own merits, I agree with the Council that allowing this appeal could set an unwanted and harmful precedent to the detriment of local character and distinctiveness.
8. I also note that the proposal is contemporary in design. In this context, paragraph 60 of the Framework states that architectural styles or particular tastes should not be imposed. Nonetheless, paragraphs 56, 60 and 64 highlight that it is proper to promote local distinctiveness and that permission should be refused for poorly designed development. Based on my reasoning above, the proposal would be deficient in this respect and contrary to paragraph 4.10 of the Camden Planning Guidance Design document which requires the design of rear extensions to be secondary to the host building.
9. It is put to me that the ground floor element of the scheme would be classed as permitted development if the appeal property had not been converted into flats. However, in comparison to a two storey extension, a single storey extension would have a materially different visual effect. Moreover I must determine the appeal on its own individual merits.
10. Therefore the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. Consequently the proposal would be contrary to LP Policy D1 which is of most relevance to this matter. This policy requires development to secure a high quality design that respects local context and character.

Other Matters

11. I note that the Council refused planning permission on only one ground as per the main issue above. However an absence of harm in other respects would not outweigh or prevent the harm identified above. Nor would the proposal's contribution towards housing supply, construction employment, local shops and amenities outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having taken all matters raised into account, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

B Bowker

INSPECTOR