
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 April 2018

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 April 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/17/3186974

Flat 1st Floor, 209 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 Miss Okpe against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2017/4069/P, dated 15 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 2 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Side dormers to first floor apartments' roof'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is an upper floor flat within a two storey semi-detached building. The building is typical of this part of the street. Angled two storey front bay windows, hipped main and rear outrigger roofs and regular spacing along a constant building line, give the buildings a pleasing consistency in public views from the street and private views from rear gardens as well as from the adjoining railway line. The Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2015 (NP) identifies the role of railway corridors in providing the space for significant views across the area. As such, these characteristics of the appeal building contribute positively to local distinctiveness.
 4. Number 211, along with a small number of other buildings, have side dormer roofs which are visible in street views. These dormers detract from the consistency of the buildings and, to an extent, from local distinctiveness. However, they are not sufficiently numerous to be characteristic of the area. The appeal proposal includes a side dormer extension which would be longer than others in the immediate vicinity and would extend to within less than 500 mm of the ridge and eaves of the roof slope. Consequently, the dormer would dominate the side roof slope and be prominent in the gap between the appeal property and No 207. It would, therefore, disrupt the consistency of the roof form, as well as the space between the appeal building and No 207.
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5. The proposed hip to gable extension of the roof of the rear outrigger would also be at odds with the hipped form of the roofs of the existing building and with prevailing form of outrigger roofs in this part of the street. This would be apparent in views from the rear of neighbouring properties and from the railway corridor.
6. The proposed dormer on the inside slope of the rear outrigger roof would be relatively inconspicuous. Nor is there anything to suggest that the rooflight in the front roof slope would be objectionable. Nevertheless, regarded as a whole, the proposal would be detrimental the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. As such, it would conflict with Policy D1 of the Council's Local Plan 2017 (LP) and Policy 2 of the NP insofar as they require development to be of a high quality of design which maintains the positive contributions to character of existing buildings. Policy 2 also requires extensions to be in proportion with their context and setting, including their relationship to adjoining properties.
7. Nor would the proposal accord with the Camden Planning Guidance on Design Supplementary Planning Document which advises that roof dormers should be sensitive to the overall structure of the existing roof form and, among other things, normally retain a gap of 500mm between the dormer and the ridge. I note that the appellant does not dispute the Council's contention that the side dormer to No 211 complies with this guidance and is, therefore, distinguishable from the proposed side dormer.
8. The reason for refusal also alleges conflict with Policy A1 of the LP. However, this policy is concerned with the living conditions of residential occupiers and there is no substantive evidence to show that the appeal proposal would be harmful in that regard.

Other Matters

9. The appellant argues that any harm caused is clearly outweighed by the material benefits of the proposal. The proposal would not increase the number of dwellings in the Borough's housing supply. Whilst it would increase the size of the appeal property, there is nothing to suggest that the property does not currently provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation for occupiers. Therefore, I consider that the proposal would provide only a limited public benefit and that it would not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR