

London 17/05/2018

Planning Application Reference: 2017/5917/P Sofie Fieldsend
Planning Refusal Letter from March 29, 2018

APPEAL STATEMENT

This letter is written to explain and support our appeal with reference to the above refusal for development.

Following we have listed all points that Camden Planning (CP) has stated as reasons for the refusal:

CP: Camden Planning / MSDA: Client's agent administrating appeal

CP, point 1) The proposed side and rear dormers and rear roof extension, by reason of their design, height, massing, scale and location, would represent incongruous additions to the host building and would be detrimental to its setting as viewed from the surrounding area, contrary to Policy D1 (Design) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan (2017).

MSDA response:

- a) The side dormers are NOT visible from the street
- b) The rear dormer is very much in scale and hence appropriate to the proposed, extended roof shape.
- c) No neighbor is adversely affected by our proposal & there are no overlooking issues.
- d) Given the fact that the first floor is already filled in and the main hip roof, its outrigger hip and the flat roof above the infill converge in a rather unsympathetic way and different to the other two adjacent houses with similar roof shapes, it seems a sensible approach to extend the hip roof as proposed.
- e) There is no grand vista disturbed and although no. 37 is similar to no. 35 and no. 33 there is clearly no architectural merit in the way these buildings have been altered.
- f) There a many precedent of rear dormers in close proximity to Minster Road, some of them clearly visible from the rear of 37 Minster Road and some of which are very much visible even from the front – with that at hand it would seem extremely unfair not to grant our client an actually much more sensitive roof development than the ones mentioned above. (also mentioned in the Design & Access statement)
- g) Side dormers are in the same material as the roof and do not have cut out windows. Which makes them less obvious

CP, point 2) The proposed timber cladding to the rear façade, by reason of its material and alien appearance, would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building and its setting as viewed from the surrounding area, contrary to Policy D1 (Design) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan (2017).

- a) This had never been flagged in the conversation with the planners and their numerous suggestions for changes; this came as a surprise aspect to us in the refusal notification.
- b) We would have been and still are open for discussion on this point; the reason for the over cladding came from the aim to improve thermal insulation performances to the rear of the building and to consolidate a rather unsightly brick façade comprising 2 different bricks.
- c) We could retain the existing brick façade if that remains the only sticking point.

MSDA Comments:

All points made by CP seem weak to us and to a great extent untrue, hence why we are lodging this appeal. The current house requires redevelopment and the best and most integrative way to do this is the roof space at the rear. Motivated by similar projects, in fact mostly very poorly designed solutions, in close proximity to 37 Minster Road, our client instructed us to look into this development. Having extensive experience with London extensions at ground and roof level we have created a well-proportioned solution, sensitive to its specific condition and surrounding.

Further to this I'd like to point out that we are well aware of Permitted Development options we could pursue, and I would imagine that some of the rather unsightly projects mentioned above in the direct surrounding might have chosen that route to add disproportionate volumes into their roofscape. This is why we chose the planning route to create a better scheme than PD rulings create. And I believe we stayed well within a planning's options to develop but obviously not in the view of Camden Planning.

Another point we would like to make is Camden's incapacity of processing the application within even a vaguely acceptable timeframe. We handed in the application on 20th October, 2017 and it was then validated only on 13th November, 2017 and the refusal letter was issued March 29th, 2018 – i.e. 5 months processing time.

Below a few points made by planning officers in correspondence with us.

We were asked to reduce the side dormer by 30% in height and width. Please note: looking at the shape of the roof it is obvious that it is impossible to have side dormers without altering the rear shape of the roof – which is one of the main points made by CP in the refusal letter, but it was not flagged at that point.

- a) MSDA: We scale them down as per suggestion

A big point was made that there is a row of houses and that the rear appearance is required to be maintained.

- a) Given the fact that the first floor is already filled in and the main hip roof, its outrigger hip and the flat roof above the infill converge in a rather unsympathetic way no consistency can be seen even at this point. The house at no. 39 has a different roof shape altogether. Houses at no. 33 and 35 have a similar roof shape and similar backs but not identical. Minster Road, Sarre Road and Westbere Road are forming a triangular block development with some very large gardens – in the corners the houses converge quite tightly, and this is what happens to no. 33 and no. 35: they both are affected by the houses converging from Westbere Road which weakens the effect of the 'row'. We find this comment far-fetched anyhow as there is no sense of a row throughout this triangular block plan and hence a pretty weak point to us.

Our point about precedence cases was dismissed by CP and were replied as followed:

- a) They do not count as these are all properties in another street.
 - i. Which makes no sense as the properties are all in the same council with the exact same rules but subsequently our precedent cases were totally ignored.
- b) CP then referred to this https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=3369897&
 - i. Which we obviously adhere to and use room to play along this guidance to implement our proposal.
- c) It appears to us that CP has not even looked at our Design & Design Statement.
- d) Please refer also to our email conversations that form part of our submission.

MSDA Conclusion:

This planning process has been very painful, and we perceived it as very unprofessional from Camden's side. Responses were slow and a change of officer in the middle of the process did slow things down even further.

We feel we have a strong proposal that is worth considering and deserve planning approval.

Michel Schranz

For and on behalf of MSDA Ltd.