



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2013

by R J Yuille MSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1 March 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/D/13/2191243
46 Gordon Place, LONDON, W8 4JF

- 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 and Mrs S Burton against the decision of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
 - The application Ref PP/12/03077 was refused by notice dated 25 October 2012.
 - The development proposed is new hidden barrel roof structure.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposed extension would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kensington Conservation Area (the Conservation Area) and if it would not, whether this would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal?

Reasons

3. The appeal property is the most northern building in an elegant terrace at 46-62 Gordon Place, the relatively secluded and intimate nature of which belies its proximity to Kensington High Street. Properties in this part of Gordon Place are defined as having a '*Category 1*' roofline, that is a generally original roofline which is an important element in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Properties with a '*Category 1*' roofline are not considered to be suitable for additional storeys.
4. It is proposed to create an additional storey with a barrel roof on top of the terrace. Although this new roof would be set back 1 metre or so from the existing roof edge and would sit below the height of the existing chimney arch whose curved form it is proposed to reflect, its unashamedly contemporary form would not be in keeping with the character of the existing butterfly roof which is concealed from the front by the currently unbroken line of a parapet wall.
5. It is of course no part of the planning system to stifle innovation or impose particular architectural styles but as paragraphs 58 and 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework make clear development should reflect the identity of local surroundings and reinforce local distinctiveness. The introduction of

- such an unsympathetic roof form into an otherwise original and unaltered roofline would not achieve these ends.
6. While the barrel roof would project above the height of the parapet wall it would not be widely visible from public viewpoints although it would be glimpsed from Kensington Church Walk at points close to its junction with Kensington High Street, from where its impact would be softened to an extent by the taller buildings to the north of the appeal property.
 7. However from private viewpoints, particularly the upper stories of the houses on the opposite side of Gordon Place, the incongruous nature of the barrel roof would be clearly apparent and would disrupt the existing regular rhythm of the chimney arches. It is of course the case that resident's appreciation of and enjoyment of conservation areas derive from both public view points and views within dwellings. So while the harm caused by the proposed development to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is less substantial than if it were more widely visible, it would nonetheless, cause harm.
 8. Number 46 is not a listed building but it is in the Kensington Conservation Area - a designated historical asset of very considerable merit. As such assets are irreplaceable any harm to them requires clear and convincing justification and needs to be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. The appellant refers to the proposed development as being part of a much needed refurbishment. However, in this instance the building in question already has a viable use as a dwelling and this would remain even if planning permission were refused for the proposed development. Little weight can, therefore, be attached to the public benefits of the scheme and these do not outweigh the harm that it would cause.
 9. The appeal scheme would not, therefore, preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kensington Conservation Area and would thus run counter to the aims of Policy CL1 and CL2 of the *Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Core Strategy* and 'saved' Policy CD44 of the *Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Unitary Development Plan* insofar as these seek to ensure that development responds to its context, reinforces the integrity of the original building and resists additional storeys on terraces where the roofline is of historic interest and unimpaired by extensions.
 10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Yuille

INSPECTOR

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