

**Committee Report
Planning Committee on 20 July, 2010**

**Item No. 1/03
Case No. 10/0868**

RECEIVED: 9 April, 2010

WARD: Mapesbury

PLANNING AREA: Kilburn & Kensal Consultative Forum

LOCATION: 61 Exeter Road, London, NW2 4SE

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing rear conservatory, erection of single-storey rear extension with green roof and extension of terrace area to the rear; installation of external cladding to flank and rear wall, raising of the height of the roof by 100mm to allow for additional insulation in the loft and installation of 2 additional rooflights adjacent to 59 Exeter Road and 1 rooflight adjacent to 61 Exeter Road; replacement of door with window and installation of 2 new ground-floor windows to side of dwellinghouse (as amended by plans received 07/07/2010).

APPLICANT: Mr Monty Wates

CONTACT: Bere:architects

PLAN NO'S:

B3.G20.P00 RevA	B3.G20.P01 RevA
B3.G20.P02 RevA	B3.G20.P03 RevA
B3.G20.E01 RevA	B3.G20.E02 RevA
B3.G20.E03 RevA	B3.G20.E04 RevA
B3.G20.S01 RevA	B3.G20.S02 RevA
B5.G20.P00 RevA	B5.G20.P01 RevA
B5.G20.P02 RevA	B5.G20.P03 RevA
B5.G20.E01 RevA	B5.G20.E02 RevA
B5.G20.E03 RevA	B5.G20.E04 RevA
B5.G20.S01 RevA	B5.G20.S02 RevA
B5.G20.S03 RevA	B5.G20.S04 RevA
B5.G20.S05 RevA	

RECOMMENDATION

Refusal

EXISTING

Two-storey detached dwellinghouse located within the Mapesbury Conservation Area. It is not a listed building. It is located on Exeter Road which is characterised by similar large detached red-brick dwellinghouses with large rear gardens. The property was likely to have been constructed between 1895 and 1905. It has a prominent two storey front gable that is replicated in style and proportions on the neighbouring property at No. 59 Exeter Road.

PROPOSAL

Demolition of existing rear conservatory, erection of single-storey rear extension with green roof and extension of terrace area to the rear; installation of external cladding to flank and rear wall,

raising of the height of the roof by 100mm to allow for additional insulation in the loft and installation of 2 additional rooflights adjacent to 59 Exeter Road and 1 rooflight adjacent to 61 Exeter Road; replacement of door with window and installation of 2 new ground-floor windows to side of dwellinghouse (as amended by plans received 07/07/2010).

HISTORY

03/0994. Full planning permission sought for erection of rear dormer window and installation of flank roof lights to dwelling house. Granted 03/06/2003

01/1850. Full planning permission sought for the formation of a vehicular crossover. Granted 08/11/2001

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment.

HE7.1 In decision making local planning authorities should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the relevant proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of:

- (i) evidence provided with the application
- (ii) any designation records
- (iii) the historic environment record and similar sources of information
- (iv) the heritage assets themselves
- (v) the outcome of the consultation with the usual interested parties
- (vi) expert advice from in-house or external experts or heritage agencies

HE7.4 Local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and of utilising their positive role in place-shaping; and
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets and the historic environment generally can make to the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities and economic vitality by virtue of the factors set out in HE3.1

HE7.5 Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use.

HE9.2 Where the application will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance local planning authorities should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) the substantial harm to or loss of significance is necessary in order to deliver substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss; or
- (ii) (a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and (b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term that will enable its conservation; and
- (c) conservation through grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is not possible; and
- (d) the harm to or loss of the heritage asset is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the site back into use.

Brent UDP 2004

- STR 13 Forms of development with a reduced overall demand for energy and better integration

with ecological and natural processes will be sought.

- STR 16 The particular Characteristics of the Borough's Conservation Areas will be conserved or enhanced.
- BE9 Architectural Quality
- BE12 Sustainable Design Principles
Incorporating built forms, technologies, orientation and layout that will contribute to reduced energy consumption and associated emissions.
- BE26 Alterations and Extensions to Buildings in Conservation Areas
Alterations to elevations of buildings in Conservation Areas should (as far as is practicable) retain the original design and materials, or where not practical should retain the original design in terms of dimensions, texture and appearance, having regard to any design guidance issued by the Local Authority.

Characteristic features such as doors, canopies, windows, roof details (e.g. chimneys, chimney pots, roof line and pitch) and party wall upstands should be retained, even when elements may be redundant.

Extensions to buildings in conservation areas should not alter the scale or roofline of the building detrimental to the unity or character of the conservation area and should be complementary to the original building in elevational features.

Mapesbury Conservation Area Design Guide

- Rendering of un-rendered brickwork, cladding and the painting of unpainted original brickwork will not be permitted under any circumstances.

Mapesbury Character Appraisal

The character appraisal was produced to identify, analyse and describe the historic and architectural character of the Mapesbury Conservation Area.

It states that the Mapesbury Conservation Area is characterised by largely unaltered townhouses from between 1895-1920. The special character of the area is based not only on the design of the buildings but also their relationship to the streetscape and each other.

While the variation in the character and styling of the buildings is sometimes significant, there is an overall coherency and rhythmic pattern of development, as well as similar materials and details within the estate which binds the estate together as one cohesive area.

SPG

- SPG5 Extending your home in Brent

How to Achieve Sustainable Design and Construction - A Householders Guide

This document was produced by Brent Council and Energy Solutions (North West) in 2004. While it is not adopted policy it does provide guidance for Brent Residents in renovating dwellinghouses in an environmentally friendly way. In particular there is guidance on 'Listed Buildings and 'Conservations Areas' where it states:

"...alterations to wall surfaces are usually damaging to the overall character and appearance of historic buildings and can, in some cases, increase the levels of moisture in original wall structures. Stone work and brick work should not normally be rendered unless the surface was rendered originally."

CONSULTATION

Mapesbury Residents Association, 3 neighbouring residents and the Council's Urban Designer were consulted regarding the proposal.

A total of 7 letters of objection were received raising the following issues:

1. The proposed development is out of keeping with the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse and would fail to preserve or enhance the dwelling within the Conservation Area.
2. The proposed single storey rear extension will have a detrimental impact on the amenity.

2 letters of support have been received from local residents in support of the applicants desire to improve energy conservation measures.

The Mapesbury Residents Association has objected to the proposed external cladding and raising of the roof on the following grounds:

1. That the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse within the streetscene
2. The difference between internal and external insulation in terms of energy savings is negligible.
3. The raising of the height of the roof will fail to preserve the detailing of the roof within the streetscene.

The Council's Urban Designer has objected to the loss of the chimneys and the rendering of the external facades.

REMARKS

Pre-application Discussions

There were no detailed pre-applications discussions regarding the proposed development at No. 61 Exeter Road however the architects have had detailed discussions with the Council regarding the proposed cladding system in respect to the planning application at 91 Dyne Road, which is within the North Kilburn Conservation Area. A report on this application appears elsewhere in this Agenda. In these discussion the Council advised that additional insulation should be provided internally rather than externally as the property was within a Conservation Area.

Amendments

Amended plans showing the following were received during the process of this application:

- 1) The retention of the chimney stacks
- 2) Removal of the proposed render sections from part of the flank walls.
- 3) A reduction in the height of the rear patio area.
- 4) Clarification regarding the alterations to the roof.

The amended plans were received on 03/06/2010 and 07/07/2010. Further clarification of the proposed alterations was provided by the architects at a meeting with Council officers on 07/07/2010. The amended plans address some but not all of the Council's concerns as outlined below.

Principle of Demolition of Rear Conservatory

The existing conservatory is not an original feature of the dwellinghouse and will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling if it is demolished. Therefore in principle the demolition is acceptable.

Character and appearance

The alterations are proposed as part of wider proposals to retro-fit the house to improve energy

conservation and sustainability. The architects are particularly keen to emphasise the level of insulation that can be achieved with external cladding is more effective than that which can be achieved by internal insulation and that the proposal will result in a significant improvement of the level of energy conservation. It is anticipated that the proposal alterations including internal and external cladding insulation, insulation under the floor boards, roof insulation and green roof, will result in a 90% reduction in annual heat demand. No details have been provided of how this is calculated in terms of the savings attributed to each measure.

Proposals that make alterations to the external appearance of a building within a Conservation Area are required to preserve and enhance the characteristics of the property that contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area. Policy BE26 of Unitary Development Plan 2004 requires that

"Alterations to elevations of buildings in Conservation Areas should (as far as is practicable) retain the original design and materials, or where not practical should retain the original design in terms of dimensions, texture and appearance, having regard to any design guidance issued by the Local Authority"

When considering such proposals for improving insulation and reducing the impact on the environment within Conservation Areas there should be consideration of the impact on the character and appearance with any alterations with a presumption in favour of methods that do not impact on the external features of the building.

The Mapesbury Conservation Area is not only defined by the red brick design of the large Victorian/Edwardian detached and semi-detached dwellings but also the relationship of the buildings with the streetscape. The Article 4 direction has removed the permitted development rights for the painting of any exterior of any building, including walls and piers, brickwork and rendered surfaces. The Design Guide states that the rendering of un-rendered brickwork, cladding and the painting of unpainted original brickwork will not be permitted under any circumstances. In essence any alterations to the external appearance of the building require careful consideration and to retain and protect the red brick appearance.

The proposal for 61 Exeter Road involves the rendering of both flank walls and the rear wall and the raising of the existing roof to install additional insulation in the loft (according to further details submitted this will raise the height of the roof eaves by 10cm). A detailed sample of the rendered cladding has been provided and the proposed plans show that this will increase the thickness of the external walls by approximately 200mm. On one side views of this will be partially restricted behind the chimney breast although it will still project 50mm beyond this and will be visible from the neighbouring properties side access. On the other side facing No. 63 the cladding will not be screened and will be clearly visible from the streetscene. Given the 1m gap between the buildings the first floor level the external cladding will be prominent on the flank walls from the street. Furthermore it will result in the loss of the original brickwork on these elevations. Due to the increased thickness of the walls the windows are to be brought forward in the flank and rear elevations. However the windows will have reveals of some 200mm as a result of the proposed cladding which again is out of keeping with the character and appearance of the original dwellinghouse.

There are also concerns that the raised roof eaves will have a detrimental impact on the detailing and proportions of the roof features such as the soffit and fascia which will be particularly evident on the front gable. The applicants have not provided details to demonstrate the full impact of the proposal on the design and appearance of the dwellinghouse. On the basis of the information provided the front fascia will increase in width from approximately 180mm to 360mm. It is considered the proposal will have a detrimental impact on the design and appearance of dwellinghouse and its relationship with the neighbouring dwellinghouses, and thus a detrimental impact on the uniformity of the building in relation to the rest of the Conservation Area.

The proposed single storey rear extension will be to the same depth as the existing single storey conservatory although it will not project as far out as the existing bay feature of the conservatory.

There will also be refurbishment of the existing rear terrace area which will include additional shrub planting on the boundary. The single storey rear extension will have a green roof planted with native species to enhance local biodiversity. It will result in the removal of the first floor rear terrace which will reduce overlooking of neighbouring gardens. The proposed single storey rear extension is shown to have a height of 4.5m above the ground-level of this and the neighbouring property at No. 59 Exeter Road. This is considered acceptable as there is an existing single storey rear extension to the neighbouring property that is currently under construction. (For clarity an enforcement investigation is to be started in relation to this property as the extensions do not appear to have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans).

Additional side rooflights are proposed in the roof planes facing 59 & 63 Exeter Road. Rooflights are acceptable in the side roof planes provided they are flush with the roof and are not clearly visible from the streetscene. If the application was to be approved this would be secured by condition.

Whilst some elements of the proposal are acceptable, overall the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Officers have given consideration to the environmental improvements from the proposal though they are not considered to outweigh the significant harm to the appearance of the building. Although some information has been provided to justify the use of external cladding a detailed breakdown of energy improvements has not been clearly shown and there has been a lack of assessment by the applicant of alternative measures such as the feasibility of insulating the property internally.

Residential Amenity

The proposed single storey rear extension will be the same depth as the existing conservatory and therefore the depth will not have detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. However the height with the parapet wall of the proposed single storey rear extension is 4.2m. This is over the recommended 3m in SPG 5. However the neighbouring dwelling is also extended to the rear and is on a slightly higher ground-level, therefore the height will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring residents.

There are also alterations proposed to the existing single storey structure adjacent to the side boundary with No. 59 Exeter Road. The pitched roof with an average height of 3.5m and an eaves height of 2.5m will be replaced with a flat green roof with a maximum height of 2.7m at the parapet wall. The extent of the structure in terms of floor area will remain unchanged. Therefore it is considered that the proposed increase in height of 20cm at the eaves level will be offset by the overall reduction in height of the structure from an average height of 3.5m to overall height of 2.7m.

The terrace area to the rear will be retained as existing therefore there will be no detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Conclusion

While it is recognised that there is a need to improve the sustainability of dwellinghouses to meet climate change legislation any alterations to a dwellinghouse within a Conservation Area need careful consideration to ensure that the features and characteristics that give the building its historic and architectural significance are retained. Following consideration of the proposed render and additional insulation in the loft it is considered that the method by which the applicants seek to improve the energy performance of the building would fail to preserve or enhance the character of the dwellinghouse within the Mapesbury Conservation Accordingly the proposal is recommended for refusal for the reason set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse Consent

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

- (1) The proposed external cladding for the flank and rear walls and the raising of the height of the roof of the dwellinghouse by reason of the excessive projection of the render, loss of the traditional red-brick finish on flank wall and first floor rear elevation, deeper reveals to first floor rear windows and the increase in width of the front fascia detailing out of proportion with neighbouring dwellings fails to preserve the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse within the Mapesbury Conservation Area contrary to policies BE9, BE25 and BE26 of Brent's UDP and the guidance contained with the Mapesbury Conservation Area Design Guide.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

UDP 2004
Mapesbury Conservation Area Design Guide
SPG5: 'Altering and Extending Your Home'

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Robin Sedgwick, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5229



Planning Committee Map

Site address: 61 Exeter Road, London, NW2 4SE

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