

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2016

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/16/3153720

Flat 4, 193 Seven Sisters Road, Islington, London N4 3NG

- 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 Costas Georgiou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2016/1081/FUL, dated 5 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of second floor rear extension and internal alteration to flat 4.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - The character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area; and
 - The living conditions of occupiers of 191 and 195 Seven Sisters Road, with particular reference to outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Located in a mid-terrace position, I observed that the appeal property shares its basic proportions, such as its depth, floor levels, ridge height and eaves height, with 187 to 191 Seven Sisters Road. These have all been extended at the rear in varying forms, but those extensions are significantly lower than the existing rear outrigger at No 193, and some way below the prevailing eaves level. As a consequence, the proportions of the upper floors, and particularly the consistent eaves line, remain unchanged across the rears of Nos 187 to 193, and the extensions remain generally subservient to the main buildings.
 4. The proposed extension would, following the extent of the previous three storey rear extension at the appeal property, occupy the entire width of the host building. By adding a further floor above, at fourth floor level, it would subsume the entire rear elevation of the original building. Furthermore, the flat roof and parapet walls would extend above the existing eaves level, thereby failing to respect the proportions of the original building.
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5. The view of the appeal property from publicly accessible street level viewpoints is limited to a view along the rear of the terrace from Pooles Park. Although seen in the context of a varied roofline and a mix of rear extensions, the proposed extension would create a more significant and bulkier disruption to the roofline than the existing dormer windows and a chimney stacks do.
6. The extension would, however, be more widely visible from the rear. From the upper floor windows of adjacent properties on Pooles Park and Clifton Court, from their outdoor amenity areas and from the private car park at the rear of the terrace, the scale and extent of the proposed extension would be readily apparent. The extension would be seen as an incongruously large, bulky and discordant addition to the rear of the host property. Its scale and height, and its relationship to the host property, would result in a dominant extension that would fail to respond positively to the existing building, and to features of the building that contribute to the character and appearance of the terrace as a whole.
7. Thus, the proposal would not accord with the guidance set out in the Islington Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, and would fail to achieve the form of high quality design, or the positive contribution to local character, that Policy DM2.1 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies (July 2013, the DMP) and Policy CS8 of the Islington Core Strategy require. The proposal would also be at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks high quality design. Whilst the limited availability of public views is noted, this is no basis for allowing the appeal proposal given the harm that I have found it would cause to the character and appearance of the appeal property, and to the surrounding area.

Living Conditions

8. The extension would project approximately 8 metres from the rear wall of No 193. Although both of the adjoining properties at Nos 191 and 195 have previously been extended, these extensions are limited to the lower floors. The additional floor proposed here, at fourth floor level, would therefore result in an outrigger substantially taller than those at either of the adjoining properties and, in comparison with the upper floors at least, one that would project significantly beyond the rear wall of the either property.
9. Although I note that the appellant accepts that there may be an increased sense of enclosure upon No 195, I do not share the view that the resultant impact would be minimal, or that it would not result in material harm. The proposed extension would add additional height and bulk to an already large and, what must feel from the rear of No 195 to be a somewhat overpowering outrigger.
10. Whilst I do not have details of the layout of the flats within No 195, and whether or not the closest windows serve food preparation areas / kitchens, it is noted that the Council's opinion that they serve habitable rooms has not been challenged. In any event, given the height and depth of the proposed extension relative to the position of the windows at the rear of No 195, I am satisfied that the extension would have an overpowering and enclosing effect on the outlook from the rear of No 195, which would be harmful to the living conditions of occupiers of No 195.

11. The proposal would therefore be contrary to DMP Policy DM2.1, which, amongst other matters, states that proposals should provide a good level of amenity including consideration of over-dominance, sense of enclosure and outlook, daylight and sunlight and overshadowing. This is reflected by the Framework which seeks to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers.
12. I accept that the orientation of the extension in relation to the rear of No 191 would be such that it would be unlikely to result in the overshadowing of, or loss of light to, properties within that building, and this weighs modestly in favour of the proposal. It may be the case that the additional height and bulk of the proposed extension, and its orientation with respect to No 195 may cause additional overshadowing of the neighbouring property at No 195 at certain times of the day, neither party has sought to quantify the extent to which this may (or may not) be harmful to living conditions of occupiers of No 195. This matter has not therefore been decisive in reaching my conclusions, set out above.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR