

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2016

by C L Humphrey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1st December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/16/3156286
38 Prebend Street, Islington, London N1 8PS

- 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 Ms Nugent against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2016/1332/FUL, dated 5 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension and terrace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a mid-terraced 2 storey plus basement house located on the south-eastern side of Prebend Street. The property, together with the rest of the terraced block within which it is located, is identified on the Council's register of locally listed buildings. The appeal site lies within Arlington Square Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).
 4. The Conservation Area is characterised by its strong visual unity, which results from the consistency of scale, materials, design and detailing of the mid-19th century terraced houses. The appeal property is of considerable architectural value, with a high quality street frontage set beneath a strong corniced parapet and an unaltered butterfly roof behind. It therefore makes a valuable contribution to the group of terraced properties and to the Conservation Area.
 5. Islington's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (UDG) states that an important constituent to the rhythm and uniformity of a residential terrace or street is the roof line. It notes that a well-defined roof line throughout helps give terraces their inherent unity and provides the natural rhythm that underpins the frontages.
 6. Islington's Conservation Area Design Guidelines (Arlington Square) (CADG) provides supplementary planning guidance which expands on development plan
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design and conservation policies. The CADG identifies 3 streets where traditional roof extensions may be permitted. Prebend Street is not one of these streets. The CADG is clear that roof extensions visible from the street, including long views from neighbouring streets, will not be allowed. The only exception to this is on terraces where a significant number have already been allowed, with the intention of eventually completing a new and harmonious roof line on these terraces.

7. There have been some extensions and alterations at roof level along the terrace. However, these alterations are situated at the ends of the block and do not amount to a significant number. A substantial section of the terrace has an unaltered run of butterfly roofs which reinforces the strong architectural rhythm of the terrace as a whole.
8. The chimney stacks and pots on the roof of the appeal property are visible in longer range views from Prebend Street, including from the open space adjacent to St James Church. The proposed roof extension would finish higher than the chimney stacks and so, although it would be set back from the front of the appeal property, it would be visible from Prebend Street rising up above the line of the front parapet.
9. Although the existing rear butterfly parapet wall would be retained and there would be no change to party walls, chimney stacks or pots, the appeal proposal would occupy the full width of the roof and would add considerable height to the rear roof line. As such, it would create a dominant uncharacteristic feature at a high level. The upper parts of the appeal property's rear elevation and butterfly roof are visible from street level near the junction of Prebend Street and Canon Street, and the appeal site can be seen from the gardens and windows of neighbouring properties. The proposed development would be very prominent from these vantage points.
10. The proposed roof extension would be constructed in materials sympathetic to the host property, and the proportions and position of dormers within the extension would reflect the existing fenestration. However, by reason of its siting and considerable width, height and bulk, the appeal proposal would interrupt the strong roof line created by the front parapet and rear butterfly roof form and would therefore detract from the composition and visual unity of the appeal property and the terrace as a whole.
11. I note from the submitted Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement that the existing roof is in a poor state of repair, the original roof coverings and lead flashings have been lost and there are uncharacteristic white fascia boards to the rear elevation. It is suggested that the proposed development would address these matters. However, this does not justify the harm that would result from the appeal proposal, particularly given that there is no reason to believe that these matters could not be reasonably resolved via other more sympathetic means.
12. It has been put to me that the existing view of the rear roof line could be photographed as a record of the original arrangement. However, this would not mitigate the harm I have identified.
13. My attention has been drawn to examples of roof extensions in the surrounding area, including at 6 Canon Street which is situated to the rear of the appeal site. This house forms part of a much shorter terraced block, and I noted

during my site visit that the roof line of this terrace has been altered considerably. As such, the scheme at No 6 does not appear to be directly comparable to the proposed development. In any event, I am required to reach conclusions based on the individual circumstances of this appeal.

14. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Arlington Square Conservation Area. As such, the appeal proposal would not accord with the design and heritage conservation and enhancement aims of Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies, Policy CS 9 of Islington's Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the guidance within the UDG and the CADG.
15. I conclude that the harm to the Conservation Area which I have identified above would be less than substantial. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. I do not consider that the provision of an additional bedroom within this family home would amount to a public benefit sufficient to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the heritage asset.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C L Humphrey

INSPECTOR