

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 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: 8th December 2016

**Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/16/3157114
278 - 280 Caledonian Road, London N1 1BA**

- 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 Andrew Panayi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2016/1087/FUL, dated 17 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'The application is for the retrospective amalgamation of the existing 5 Flats D, E, F, G and H into one flat. It is also proposed that the existing combined flat now named Flat D be modified from a four bedroom flat to a three bedroom flat. A roof extension is also proposed as shown on the attached drawings. NB Only internal building works have been carried out'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The address given on the application form is 280 Caledonian Road. However, it is clear from the Site Location Plan that the appeal site is located at 278 - 280 Caledonian Road. Therefore, I have taken the full address of the appeal site, set out in the banner heading above, from the appeal form rather than the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located on the east side of Caledonian Road, within Barnsbury Conservation Area (the Conservation Area). The site comprises a pair of 3 storey plus basement mid terraced buildings with a commercial unit at the front of the ground floor and a number of residential units to the rear and on the upper floors.
 5. The Conservation Area is characterised by impressive late Georgian and early Victorian predominantly residential development which is set out in a formal arrangement of terraces and squares. The use of strong building and roof lines, repetition of architectural features and limited palette of materials give the Conservation Area a coherent and harmonious character and appearance.
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6. It is proposed that the existing pair of rear additions would be extended at roof level in association with internal alterations to create a 3 bedroom flat at first and second floor level in the rear addition in place of 5 studios.
7. The Council's Conservation Area Design Guidelines (Barnsbury) (CADG) state that full width rear extensions higher than one storey or half width rear extensions higher than two storeys will not normally be permitted, unless it can be shown that no harm will be caused to the character of the area.
8. The existing pair of rear additions is 2 full storeys high, and each has a dual pitched gable ended roof which meet in a central valley with residential accommodation in the roof space. The proposed development would infill the central valley, creating a flat crown roof. In place of the 2 existing small porthole windows, 4 windows would be inserted at second floor level above the existing window openings. These windows would serve the enlarged residential accommodation on the top floor.
9. There are no rear additions more than 2 storeys high along this section of the terrace. The existing rear additions to the appeal premises are already fairly substantial full-width structures. However, the pitched roof form serves to break up their mass and lends a vertical emphasis which reflects that of the main terrace. They therefore appear subordinate to the existing main rear elevations.
10. Although the overall height of the rear additions would not alter, infilling the valley roof would increase the mass of the structure and introduce an ungainly and contrived roof form. The proposed development would appear as a full 3 storey structure, with an uncharacteristic horizontal emphasis that would be exacerbated by the squat proportions of the fenestration. As a result, the rear additions would no longer appear subservient to the appeal premises.
11. Overall, by reason of the siting, scale and design of the proposed rear roof extension, the appeal proposal would result in the creation of a bulky, dominant and discordant form of development which would fail to respect the established architectural rhythm, form and proportions of the appeal premises.
12. Whilst the proposed development would not be visible from the street, it would be seen from the rear windows and gardens of neighbouring residential properties within the Conservation Area. The lack of public views is no basis for allowing the appeal proposal given the harm I have identified.
13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the area, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Barnsbury Conservation Area. Therefore, the appeal proposal would not accord with the design and heritage conservation and enhancement aims of Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan, Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies, Policies CS 8 and CS 9 of Islington's Core Strategy and guidance within the Islington Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document and the CADG.
14. As well as the development plan policies and guidance set out above, I have also had regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the core planning principles and the policy aims relating to design and heritage set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). For the

reasons given above, the appeal proposal would not secure high quality design or conserve the heritage asset in a manner appropriate to its significance, as required by paragraph 17 of the Framework. Furthermore, for the same reasons, the proposed development would not add to the overall quality of the area, respond to local character or reinforce local distinctiveness, as specifically required by the Framework at paragraphs 58 and 60. The appeal proposal would therefore fail to protect and enhance the built environment as required by the environmental role set out in paragraph 7 of the Framework. The three dimensions of sustainable development are mutually dependent, and I conclude that the conflict with the environmental dimension would outweigh any positive contributions the proposed development would make to the social and economic dimensions through the more efficient use of space within the appeal premises. The appeal proposal would therefore not constitute sustainable development when assessed against the policies contained within the Framework as a whole.

15. I conclude that the harm to the significance of 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 more efficient use of space within the appeal premises 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