The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by A A Phillips BA(Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/16/3163096
23 Healey Street, Camden, London NW1 8SR

- 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 Oliver McHugh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
- The application Ref 2016/4729/P, dated 22 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 October 2016.
- The development proposed is the creation of a new 3rd floor storey with pitched roof slope.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Preliminary matter

3. My attention has been drawn to two other recent appeal decisions. The first being one which was allowed and planning permission granted in July 2016 for changes to the existing dwelling including the demolition of an existing two storey rear extension, new rear extension and addition of a new room at roof level and interior layout modifications at the neighbouring property No 21[1]. In allowing the appeal the Inspector found that proposal to be neither dominant nor incongruous and would be in keeping with its surroundings.

4. Secondly, an appeal at the current appeal site was dismissed in September 2016 for the creation of a new 3rd floor storey with pitched roof slope[2]. I have no evidence that at the time of dismissing this appeal the Inspector was aware of the recent grant of planning permission for a similar development at No 21. Nonetheless, the Inspector found that the roof extension would not represent an appropriate form of development in this location. Consequently, the harm to the character and appearance of the area outweighed the benefits of the proposal in meeting the appellant's family's accommodation needs. These appeal decisions are material considerations in the determination of the current appeal.

[1] APP/X5210/D/16/3147399
[2] App/X5210/D/16/3154201

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a mid-terraced house located in a row of similarly proportioned and designed properties on Healey Street, in mainly residential area of Camden. There is strong architectural rhythm and visual consistency along both sides of the frontage of Healey Street. Also, of particular interest is the regular pattern of valley roofs and their distinct peaks and troughs which, although not particularly prominent from Healey Street itself as a consequence of the restricted angled views, is very evident from Grafton Crescent to the rear where the rear of properties along Healey Street are exposed.

6. The proposal would increase the height of the existing roofline. However, it would be set back from the street frontage by sufficient distance for it to be hidden behind the parapet wall.

7. There are existing small roof extensions at Nos 15 and 25 Healey Street, neither of which is visually prominent. Although at present there remains a prominent and consistent roofline to the rear of the terrace which is particularly important in defining the character and appearance of the row of properties and the area, generally, this would be somewhat disrupted should the planning permission at No 21 be implemented.

8. The extension the subject of this appeal would effectively fill the gap between two peaks of the roofs. Consequently, it would break the rhythm and pattern of the established roof design which is strongly evident from the rear. The overall design, bulk, height and size of the extension with its steeply angled roof slope to the rear and close proximity to the existing rear parapet wall means that it would be visible from street level to the rear. Although it may not be very prominent from the ground close to the site, it would nonetheless be clearly and markedly visible from Grafton Street and from angled side views as a dominant roof scape feature.

9. Furthermore, the architectural rhythm and quality of the roof scape viewed from the upper floors of properties in the immediate vicinity of the site along Healey Street and Grafton Crescent would be compromised to a harmful degree.

10. I fully recognise that the proposal may be very similar to the approved development at No 21 and that the implementation of the scheme at No 21 may lead to the rhythm and pattern of the roof being broken. However, in my opinion the development and the combined effect of the two adjacent roof extensions would be particularly prominent and would dominate the local roof scape to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

11. Furthermore, as a result of the visually unbroken run of valley roofs I find that the roof addition would have an adverse effect on the local skyline as a consequence of its height, design, scale and poor relationship to the existing roof form.

12. I recognise that there are other modern features and alterations to properties along Healey Street, including various sloping roofs and extensions of different sizes and forms. However, most of these are subservient to their host properties, do not appear intrusive or dominant and consequently do not harm the character and appearance of the area. I find that rather than being

subservient, the current proposal would be dominant, intrusive and harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

13. I am also aware that an extension to No 14 Healey Street was allowed at appeal. However, that property is situated on the other side of Healey Street where there is not such an unbroken pattern of roofs and where the rear of properties are far less visible from the public realm. Therefore, I do not consider that direct parallels can be drawn to the current appeal.

14. In reaching this conclusion my findings are not inconsistent with the conclusions of either of my Inspector colleagues in determining previous appeals at Nos 21 and 23 Healey Street.

15. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such it would conflict with the design requirements of Policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy2010-2025 (November 2010) and policy DP24 of the Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (November 2010).

16. Although not identified in the Council's decision notice, I also find the proposal to be contrary to the provisions of Camden Planning Guidance – Design CPG1 which states that a roof alteration or addition is likely to be unacceptable in the circumstances where there is likely to be an adverse effect on the skyline.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above and taking into account other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alastair Phillips

INSPECTOR