

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

**by Brendan Lyons BArch MA MRTPI IHBC**

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

**Decision date: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/16/3160404**

**45 & 47 Ronalds Road, Islington, London N5 1XF**

- 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 Tim Wyatt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
  - The application Ref P2016/1647/FUL, dated 26 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2016.
  - The development proposed is described as a joint application for a loft conversion over the outrigger at No.45 and No.47 Ronalds Road N5 1XF.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of two rear extensions in order to form a second floor level above the existing outriggers to both terrace properties at 45 and 47 Ronalds Road, Islington, London N5 1XF, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P2016/1647/FUL dated 28 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
  1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
  2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan, and drawing Nos. LW201600046/ 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09 and 10.
  3. The facing materials of the extensions hereby permitted shall match the existing building in terms of colour, texture, appearance and architectural detailing and shall be retained as such thereafter.

### Procedural matters

2. The appeal involves two adjoining mid-terrace houses, Nos.45 and 47 Ronalds Road. The appeal is submitted in the names of the owners of both houses, but as the planning application was made solely by Mr Wyatt, of No.47, only his name appears in the header above.
  3. The appeal form adopts the description of development used in the Council's decision notice, which refers to two rear extensions to form a second floor level. As this more accurately defines the proposed development than the planning application, which described the proposal as a loft conversion, I have adopted it for the decision set out above.
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## **Main Issue**

4. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the houses and of the surrounding area.

## **Reasons**

5. The appeal site lies in an enclave of densely built late-nineteenth century urban development. The grid of streets is characterised by long unbroken runs of terraced houses. The appeal terrace is of two main storeys, with attic-level accommodation lit by dormer windows to front and rear. Each pair of houses has an 'outrigger' wing projecting to the rear, some 6m in depth. These are also two-storey but lower in scale, so that the ridge of their shallow-pitched roof runs in below the eaves of the main roof.
6. Permission is now sought to add an extra floor over the full extent of the outrigger at Nos.45 and 47. The extension would be built in materials to match the existing, and its roof would reflect the existing roof form, but with its eaves aligned with the eaves of the main roof and its ridge running into the rear roof slope. A pair of timber sliding sash windows would be fitted in the end gable wall, also to match the existing, with a small bathroom window in the side wall of No.45.
7. The Council considers that the two-storey outriggers are a distinctive feature of the terrace, which reinforces the local character of the area. Although acknowledging that the proposal would preserve the symmetry of the pair of houses, the Council's concern is that the introduction of a second floor extension would break the compositional unity of the rear elevation of the terrace, in particular by rising above the original eaves line.
8. The evidence suggests that the terrace has retained its original form to a considerable degree. The regular pattern of the outriggers contributes to the character of the terrace, but to a much lesser extent than the continuous front elevation. Because of the tight street pattern, there is no clear view of the rear of the terrace from public vantage points. Owing to the slightly curved alignment of the opposite rows of houses and the very limited space between them, a comprehensive view of the full length of the terrace is not readily available even from the private realm. For these reasons the contribution of the pattern of outriggers to the overall character of the area is modest.
9. The appellant refers to an emerging pattern of rear 'box dormers', constructed under 'permitted development' rights. Due to the restricted visibility, I was not able to confirm this on my visit to the site. However, I noted the flat-roofed dormer that has been added over the full extent of the outrigger at No.43, immediately next to the appeal properties. Although this does not rise above the main eaves, its box-like shape, covering only one half of the pair, makes a significant interruption to the consistent row of outriggers.
10. I also noted that the terrace immediately to the rear, Nos.38-62 Witherington Road, has a strong pattern of three storey outriggers projecting from a two-storey front range, with the roof of the outrigger joining the main roof just below ridge level. The terrace further to the west, Nos.18-36 Witherington Road, also features mainly three-storey rear wings, but here attached to a three-storey front range, and with very shallow-pitched roofs tucked just below the main eaves.

11. In this context, I consider that the appeal proposal would not appear out of character either with the houses themselves or with the surrounding area. Because both houses are involved, the proposal would allow the existing form of the outrigger to be replicated, but raised by some 2.6m. The effect would be considerably less intrusive than if only one side of the pair were to be altered. With the use of matching materials and window styles, the extension would appear as a relatively sympathetic addition to the houses. The continuity of the pattern of outriggers has already been interrupted by the box dormer at No.43, against which the appeal proposal would not stand out as an incongruous insertion in the row.
12. The use of consistent materials, detailing and form would comply with guidance on the design of extensions in the Islington Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD'), first adopted in 2006. This acknowledges that rear elevations of terraces generally have less formality than their fronts, with some freedom to adapt to occupiers' requirements. The general principles are that rear extensions should avoid disrupting the existing rhythm of the existing rear elevations, or dominate the main building.
13. In this case, because of its double width and matching form, the proposal would maintain the existing rhythm but with a variation in height. Its shallow roof would come well below the height of the existing rear dormers on the main roof slope, and would be considerably lower than the roofs opposite. The enlarged outrigger would not dominate the main building. I acknowledge that the SPD generally seeks to restrict rear extensions to below eaves level of the existing front building, and I agree that this can often be a key consideration, particularly with half-width extensions. However, in the present case, I consider that the proposal would comply with the principles which the SPD seeks to observe.
14. In the light of this, I find that the proposal would not conflict with the urban design objectives of Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (March 2016) and Policies CS8 and CS9 of Islington's Core Strategy (February 2011) and the more detailed requirements of Policy DM2.1 of Islington's Local Plan Development Management Policies (June 2013).

#### *Other matter*

15. The Council's appeal statement seeks to raise an issue of adverse effect on outlook from the first floor windows of the adjoining houses, Nos.43 and 49. This concern was noted in the officer report on the planning application, but was not carried forward as a reason for refusal of the application. The Council did not avail of the opportunity given to clarify its position for the appeal. I conclude that the Council does not regard any adverse effect as sufficiently harmful to warrant dismissal of the appeal. I note that the effect on No.43 would be very similar to that on No.45 of No.43's dormer, and that no objection has been received from occupiers of No.49. In these circumstances, I find no reason to disagree with the Council's decision.

#### **Conditions**

16. The Council has recommended three conditions to be attached to the permission, to which the appellant raises no objection. I agree that, subject to slight amendment in the interests of precision, the proposed conditions would be reasonable and necessary. In addition to the standard condition on

commencement time, a condition specifying compliance with the approved plans is necessary to confirm the approved form of development. The third condition, requiring the use of matching materials and detailing, is necessary to ensure that the character and appearance of the houses and of the local area is protected.

### **Conclusion**

17. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the houses and of the surrounding area. Having taken account of all representations made, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to conditions.

*Brendan Lyons*

INSPECTOR