
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2017

by I Radcliffe BSc(Hons) MRTPI MCIEH DMS

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

Decision date: 01 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/16/3163052

46 Hornsey Road, Islington, London N7 7BP

- 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 Emelia Tawiah against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2016/0837/FUL, dated 3 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a third floor extension and rear balcony.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The decision notice lists the drawings that relate to the application. The appellant states that this list is different to the drawings that were submitted with the application. For example, it excludes drawing no 3006/3, which is the only drawing showing the proposed roof terrace at first floor level, and includes drawing No 3006/2A, which inaccurately shows the side elevation of the proposed roof extension.
3. These criticisms have not been challenged by the Council. On the basis of what I have read in relation to this matter, and having viewed the different plans referred to, I agree with the appellant that the drawings she has listed accurately describe the proposal. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of these plans, which are Location Plan (1/125), 3006/1A, 3006/2B, 3006/3 and 3006/4.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The property is a three storey building that forms part of a short terrace on Hornsey Road. The terrace is located within an urban part of London where Victorian terraced dwellings and more recent, often much larger, buildings predominate. A rear door is proposed to the first floor flat allowing the flat roof of the ground floor unit below to be used as a roof balcony / terrace. The Council has no objection to this part of the proposed development and I agree that position.
 6. The proposed roof extension would provide a bedroom and storage space to create a two bedroom flat. At present, the low angled dual pitched roof of the
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appeal property and its immediate neighbours is hidden from view directly outside the terrace by a front parapet wall. However, the side of the roof is visible in views on the approach from the north along Hornsey Road past the railway bridge. Its rear elevation also forms part of the Benwell Road streetscene in views from in front of The Emirates Stadium, the steps down from it and its pedestrian concourse. From here the unaltered roofline of the terrace is evident.

7. The Islington Urban Design Guide is a supplementary planning document to which I have had due regard. It provides detailed design standards for the Borough and seeks to protect unaltered rooflines which provide unity and a natural rhythm to terraces from extensions that would cause disruption and be unsympathetic.
8. The proposed extension, effectively level with the roof ridge, would occupy the full width and length of the rear of the roof, including its two storey back addition. This large, bulky extension would dominate the terraced roof and alter its simple restrained roofline and form. In views on the approach from the north, the extension would alter the simple gable ended roof of the appeal property visible above the flat roofed building (No 48) on the corner and intrude into the skyline above.
9. In terms of Benwell Road, owing to its setback, the rear of the appeal property only forms part of the streetscene between the newly built flats next to 111 Benwell Road and the junction with Hornsey Road. Here, the street frontage is characterised by flat roofed buildings. The presence of lower buildings along Benwell Road to the rear of the appeal property allows its rear elevation to contribute to this streetscene.
10. Whilst Nos 111 and 113 have roof extensions, and the newly built flats referred to mimic this, the remaining buildings that form part of the streetscene in which the rear of the appeal property is viewed do not have roof extensions. As a result, whilst Benwell Road as a whole is characterised by a mixture of mansard and flat roofs, the streetscene at the end of the road, where the proposed extension would be visible, is not. Moreover, unlike the appeal proposal, the extensions to Nos 111 and 113 are set back from the main elevation thereby respecting the form of the original building and reducing their prominence.
11. The prominence of the rear elevation of the appeal property in views from Benwell Road is reduced somewhat by its set back from this road and presence of taller buildings along Hornsey Road acting as a backdrop. However, given the large unsympathetic scale of the proposed extension, and the break it would cause in the unaltered roofline of the terrace, the extension would nevertheless be readily apparent.
12. Taking all these matters into account, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be poorly designed and would cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, policy DM 2.1 of Islington's Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMPDPD) and the SPD. These policies require the protection of the character and appearance of a locality through high quality design that respects local design features. It would also be contrary to a core planning principle of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') which seeks to secure high quality design.

Conclusion

13. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. The roof extension, in accordance with policy DM3.3 of the DMPDPD, would create a two bedroom flat for which there is a demand in a location where services and facilities are readily accessible. The terrace / balcony would also provide amenity space for the first floor flat. However, the poor design of the roof extension would cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the building, terrace of which it forms a part and the streetscene to the side and rear of the property. This would be contrary to the development plan and a core planning principle of the Framework as described above.
14. Having regard to all of the matters raised, I conclude that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would clearly outweigh its benefits and that it would not comply with the development plan and the Framework as a whole. As a result, the proposal would not constitute a sustainable development. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Ian Radcliffe

Inspector