The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2017

by Mike Worden BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30th May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/17/3169410
65 Bewdley Street, Islington, London N1 1HD

- 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 Roy Ward against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
- The application Ref P2016/3926/Ful, dated 7 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 December 2016.
- The development proposed is a ground and first floor rear extension together with loft conversion with rear dormer window.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and of the Barnsbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is part of a row of relatively modern terraced townhouses within the Barnsbury Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is the largest in Islington and is characterised by the presence of a number of important late Georgian and early Victorian squares and residential terraces.

4. Along Bewdley Street, the houses on the south side are older terraces in a continuous row, but on the north side where the appeal property is situated, the houses are formed into a number of blocks of terraces. There is a degree of symmetry on this north side of the street with a detached block of one style in the centre and then two sets of linked blocks of a different style either side.

5. The appeal property is at the eastern end of the street, on the end of a terrace where it links to the next block. The design of these two blocks is very similar but they are stepped back from each other slightly and reversed such that the block containing the appeal property faces the street, but the adjacent block faces a small courtyard at the rear, Carfree Close. Both blocks have a three storey appearance with the inclusion of a mansard roof on the upper floor. The townhouses and their rear gardens are relatively narrow.

6. The proposal would introduce a ground floor extension of around 4m in depth to the rear of the property extending its full width, with a less deep first floor extension above it, and also create a dormer extension in the roof.

7. The proposed development to the rear is essentially a two storey extension across the full width of the house, but with the first floor stepped back behind the building line of the terrace on Carfree Close. This seeks to respond to, and take advantage of, the stagger of the terrace blocks. However the proposed extension would actually break up the rhythm of the design of the terraced blocks and appear discordant when viewed along the rear of the terraces or from the courtyard of Carfree Close.

8. The stagger and reversal of the blocks of terraces at Carfree Close and Ferriby Close at the opposite end of Bewdley Street would appear to be a particular design element which is part of the character and appearance of the area, and the extension would erode that element and appear incongruous. There are no two storey extensions along the backs of any of the terraced blocks on the north side of Bewdley Street which would mean that the proposed extension would be particularly noticeable in views along the backs of these properties, and would interrupt the existing pattern.

9. The proposed dormer would project out of the rear roof slope. Although it is only the width of one window, the dormer would break the otherwise unaltered roofline of the two linked blocks of terraces and would appear discordant in the roofscape and would jar with the design of the upper storey of the terrace which already incorporates a mansard roof.

10. The roofline of the matching set of terraces at the other end of Bewdley Street (Ferriby Close) is also unaltered except for the insertion of velux windows in one property. Dormer extensions are therefore uncharacteristic of the pattern of development on this side of Bewdley Street and consequently I consider that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

11. In reaching this view I have taken into account that there are occasional dormers to be seen on some of the older terraces in the vicinity, but I consider that the introduction of a dormer extension on to the clean rooflines of the modern terraces on Bewdley Street where mansard roofs feature, would be out of keeping with their character and appearance.

12. I have also taken into account that direct public views of the rear roofs are somewhat limited, given the extent and form of the buildings of Barnsbury Park to the rear, but consider that the proposed dormer would jar sufficiently in the otherwise unbroken roofline for it to be noticeable even in those limited views from the rear or sides of the terraces.

13. Whilst the terraces along the north side of Bewdley Street are more modern when compared to many other properties in the Barnsbury Conservation Area, they nonetheless contribute to its character. The pattern and design of the blocks, the clean rooflines, their symmetry, and their linkages sit well in the street pattern and building form in this part of the Conservation Area.

14. In view of all of the above points I conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area and, as a result, it would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Barnsbury Conservation Area.

15. For these reasons I conclude that the proposed development would be contrary to Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of the Council's Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2013, Policies CS8 and CS9 of Islington's Core Strategy 2011 and Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2016, which all seek to encourage developments that are of good design, reflect local character and which protect and enhance heritage assets in the borough.

16. The proposed development would also be contrary to the guidance within the Council's recently approved Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017 which seeks to ensure, amongst other things, that new extensions are of good design and respond to local character, as well as being contrary to the Islington Conservation Area Design Guidelines 2002.

17. Given the size of the Conservation Area and the scale of the proposed development, the harm that it would cause would be less than substantial. In accordance with paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, I must weigh harm against the public benefits of the proposal. Although the proposed development would provide additional living accommodation, I consider this does not outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mike Worden

INSPECTOR