
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 April 2017

by Brendan Lyons BArch MA MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 5th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/17/3168517

31 Leconfield Road, Islington, London N5 2RZ

- 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 James O'Doherty against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2016/2775/FUL, dated 6 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is construction of a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of a mansard roof extension at 31 Leconfield Road, Islington, London N5 2RZ, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P2016/2775/FUL, dated 6 July 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 29-31LR L(LR)01; L(LR)02-5; L(LR)09-13; L(LR)014-15A; L(LR)16.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) Notwithstanding condition 2, no development shall take place until details of the front dormer windows and their surrounds have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Procedural matters

2. No.31 Leconfield Road forms part of a terrace of houses dating from the late nineteenth century, located in an inner suburban area. The house has a 'valley' roof hidden from the street behind a parapet. Permission is sought to add a mansard roof extension above parapet level. When the planning application was submitted, an application was also made for a similar extension at the adjoining house, No.29.¹ The application plans show proposed mansards

¹ Application Ref. P2016/2776/FUL

at both houses. However, the proposals are not mutually dependant, and no appeal is before me against the refusal of permission for No.29. I have therefore treated the plans for that extension as indicative only and have confined consideration of the current appeal to the proposal at No.31 alone.

3. The Council's reason for refusal of the application refers to policies of the London Plan ('LP') 2011, Islington's Core Strategy ('CS') 2011, Islington's Development Management Policies ('DMP') 2013 and to the Islington Urban Design Guide ('UDG') 2006. The planning application had made comparisons between the adopted UDG and ongoing consultation on its review, but the Council decided that only minimal weight could be given to the emerging revision of the document. The grounds of appeal also refer to the draft revised UDG. Since the appeal was submitted, the Council has formally adopted the revised UDG and has provided a copy of the replacement Supplementary Planning Document. As the appeal must be considered on the basis of up-to-date policy and guidance, the parties were allowed the opportunity to make additional representations on the implications of the new guidance, which the Council has availed itself of.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed mansard extension on the character and appearance of the house and of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is one of a short terrace, which comprises four matching houses and a wider unit. To the front, the houses retain much of their original detailing around window and door openings and have an unbroken parapet line, although the original moulded cornice has been lost. The terrace is two storeys over basement to the front and three storeys to the rear, where the original profile of the valley roofs can be seen from nearby buildings and from a car park serving the adjoining block of flats. This modern block, Nos.35A-J, continues the terrace, maintaining the front parapet line. But it also has an extra storey set back from the street, topped by a shallow hipped roof, which is clearly visible from the street. Beyond this building, the generally consistent built form is interrupted by a taller modern infill house, No.37A, which breaks the parapet line with distinctive overhanging eaves. Thus, while there is relative consistency in the appearance of the original terrace, the immediate context shows some variation in roof form.
6. The 2006 UDG advised that mansard extensions to previously unbroken rooflines would generally be considered unacceptable. In refusing the planning application, the Council placed considerable weight on that guidance. The effect on the unbroken roofline was also a factor of importance in the dismissal of a 2006 appeal² against an earlier refusal of a proposed mansard.
7. The updated 2017 UDG adopts a less prescriptive approach to roof extensions. The UDG advises that consideration needs to be given to the particular terrace and to the local context, but acknowledges that outside conservation areas there is scope to introduce roof extensions of quality design. Roof extensions visible from the public realm need to be designed in a style appropriate to the host building.

² Appeal ref APP/V5570/A/06/2019775

8. In the light of the revised guidance, the Council now accepts that the proposal would be generally consistent with the UDG guidance on an appropriate form of roof extension. I agree that in the particular context of this short terrace, especially having regard to the changes to the street scene brought about by neighbouring development, the proposal would not form a discordant or dominant feature, as originally feared by the Council. The roofline to the rear, which is only visible in a limited number of private views, is already less consistent and is affected by the bulky rear wings. The proposal would preserve the original valley profile in accordance with the guidance and would not appear inappropriate.
9. The proposed dormer windows to front and rear would align with and reflect the sash form of the existing windows below. The Council's outstanding concern is that the width of the proposed front windows, and particularly of their metal-clad surrounds, would not be sufficiently slender to accord with the guidance. However, I consider this to be a matter that could be resolved by the approval of details secured by a planning condition.
10. Subject to the resolution of those details, I find that the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the house or of the wider area. There would be no conflict with the objectives to protect local character set by LP Policy 7.4, CS Policies CS8 and CS9 and DMP Policy DM2.1.

Conditions

11. In addition to standard recommended conditions on commencement time and compliance with approved plans, the Council has put forward a condition requiring materials to match the existing house. The appellant raises no objection and I consider the three conditions to be reasonable and necessary.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, and having taken all submissions into account, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to the conditions I have outlined.

Brendan Lyons

INSPECTOR