
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2017

by S M Holden BSc MSc CEng MICE TPP FCIHT MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/D/17/3181506

104, Farrant Avenue, Wood Green, London N22 6PE

- 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 T Ali against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2017/1086, dated 14 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with rear dormer window and a single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal has already been implemented. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis that it seeks permission for the development as constructed. The Council has not raised any objection to the rear extension and I see no reason to take a different view.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether or not the dormer window would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Noel Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Farrant Avenue lies within the Noel Park Conservation Area. In assessing the proposal, I therefore have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that Area. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any loss or harm to them requires clear and convincing justification.
5. The Noel Park Conservation Area is characterised by two-storey terraced dwellings in small plots set out along straight streets. The regularity of the design and scale of the properties, together with a consistency of architectural details and use of materials, give a strong sense of uniformity within the urban form. In particular, the roof lines and styles are among the defining characteristics of the Conservation Area and the reason that the Council has imposed an Article 4 direction removing permitted development rights in relation to roof alterations.

6. No 104 is a centre terrace house with a small rear garden. The proposal sought permission for a flat roof dormer window which would occupy the full width of the property. As now constructed the loft conversion has resulted in almost the total loss of the rear roofslope of No 104. From what I saw on my site visit the roof on the remainder of the terrace along this side of the street is in its original form, as is that of the Gladstone Avenue terrace which runs parallel to Farrant Avenue.
7. In this context, although the dormer is set in just above the eaves and below the ridge its width and scale are out of keeping with the form of the original roof. It is a bulky and incongruous addition which detracts from the appearance of the house and is not only harmful to No 104 but also to the unaltered roofscape of the wider terrace. Whilst it is not visible from the public realm, it can be seen in private views from a good many properties in Gladstone Avenue which look out towards the site.
8. The appellant drew my attention to dormer windows that have been inserted in the rear roofslopes of properties on the opposite side of the street at Nos 125 and 129. However, other than photographs, I have no evidence of when these were constructed or how they were assessed by the Council. On the other hand, the Council referred me to three appeal decisions¹ in which Inspectors confirmed that such alterations cause harm to the visual continuity of the roof form within the Conservation Area. They also acknowledged that alterations which were allowed historically do not provide a precedent.
9. Alterations to an individual building may cause harm that is less than substantial to the conservation area as a whole, as would be the case here. However, the cumulative effects of similar, incremental changes to the terrace over time would result in the unacceptable loss of features that contribute positively to the significance of the heritage asset.
10. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that where harm to a heritage asset is less than substantial this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The enlargement of No 104 to provide additional living accommodation would be a private benefit to the occupants of the house. However, there are no public benefits to outweigh the harm I have identified.
11. I conclude that the dormer is harmful the character and appearance of the host property and the terrace of which it is a part. The dormer therefore fails to preserve or enhance the Noel Park Conservation Area and is contrary to saved Policies UD3 and CSV5 of the Haringey Unitary Development Plan, Policy SP11 and SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan and Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan. All these policies, amongst other things, require high quality design which respects its context, especially in areas protected for their historic interest. It also conflicts with the advice of the Framework to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
12. For this reason, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/Y5420/D/15/3154713, APP/Y5420/D/15/3135736 and APP/Y5420/D/16/3143697