
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2019

by Ian Harrison BA Hons DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/19/3232693
73 Leverton Street, London NW5 2NX

- 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 Caroline Springer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2019/2217/P, dated 25 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a mansard roof extension over the main building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development used above has been taken from the planning application form. The council used a different description and in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application in the heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within a mostly residential setting, comprising of terraced dwellings with three storey frontages, many of which have been the subject of roof extensions. The site is within the Kentish Town Conservation Area. The Council's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAAMS), adopted 2011, identifies that the conservation area consists of a commercial area and surrounding residential streets which demonstrate how and when the original village of Kentish Town grew. The CAAMS identifies that Leverton Street consists of homogenous built form with narrow, coloured stucco houses and detailed joinery. In this regard I observed that the scale of the residential buildings and their original architectural detailing creates an element of consistency and defines the period of growth, which is an important feature of the Conservation Area's significance.
5. The site contains a building that is similar in scale to the remainder of the terrace and is one of a string of properties that have not been the subject of roof extensions. It is also apparent that the dwelling and its neighbour at 71 Leverton

Street form a pair which have retained a very similar appearance. Due to their positioning at the junction of Leverton Street with Countess Road, these buildings and their immediate neighbours terminate the view along Countess Road. As such, the site plays an important role in defining the appearance of Leverton Street and is important to the significance of the Conservation Area. The rear elevations of the upper floors of the terrace are visible from Railey Mews but, due to the variation between buildings and alterations that have occurred, the existing rear elevations make a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area.

6. The dwelling, along with most other dwellings within Leverton Street, is identified as being a positive contributor to the Conservation Area by the CAAMS. Similarly, I find that the dwelling at the appeal site contributes positively to the appearance of the residential part of the Conservation Area and is of particular importance to the significance of the heritage asset due to its prominence from Countess Road. As a proposal falling within the Conservation Area, I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.
7. The proposal would see the addition of a mansard roof extension which would be alike several other mansards that have been added to properties within the surrounding area. However, unlike the other mansards, the extension would be isolated from any other roof extension and would be prominent in views along Countess Road. The development would unbalance the existing pair of dwellings and therefore affect the contribution that they make, as a pair, to the view along Countess Road and the contribution that this view makes to the Conservation Area as a whole. In this regard I do not find that the proposal is consistent with the Camden Planning Guidance – Design (2015) which states that additional storeys can be found acceptable where there is an established form of roof addition and where continuing the pattern of development would help to re-unite a group of buildings.
8. As set out above, the rear of the terrace makes a less valuable contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area and in this instance, as there is less distinction between properties, one additional mansard would not substantially change the appearance of the rear of the terrace. This does not however reduce or mitigate the effect of the development when viewed from the front.
9. Whilst the design is in-keeping with other mansards and acceptable in terms of its form and detailing, its isolation from other roof extensions and the effect on the roofline, when viewed from Countess Road, would fail to preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area. I consider that the harm caused to the overall significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial.
10. As less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area has been identified, paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that this is weighed against any public benefits of the proposal. No public benefits have been advanced by the appellant and it appears that the proposed extension would only benefit the appellant. Therefore, there appear to be no public benefits that outweigh the harm identified.
11. For these reasons, the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) which seeks that development, amongst other things, respects local character and context, and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of conservation areas. The proposal is also contrary to Policy D3 of the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (2016) which requires that development is well integrated into its surroundings,

reinforces and enhances local character and draws upon key aspects of character from the surrounding area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Ian Harrison

INSPECTOR