

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: 18 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/19/3232489

57 Leconfield Road, 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 Aidan Rouse against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2019/0584/FUL, dated 21 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a front and rear mansard loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a dwelling which is part of a long terrace that has a consistent building line following the curve of Leconfield Road. The majority of the buildings within the terrace have parapet roofs at the front that are of a consistent height. Taller buildings exist at both ends of the terrace, including what appears to be a recent development at one end and a string of pitched roof dwellings at the other which are wholly different in scale to the remainder of the terrace. Although there is a consistency to the scale and overall form of the majority of the dwellings within the terrace, there is variation to the architectural detailing of the buildings, including a glass dominated building.
4. The dwelling at the appeal site has a two storey frontage but features a lower ground floor which is apparent when viewed from the rear. The dwelling features a butterfly roof that is hidden from the public domain by the parapet at the front of the dwelling. The appeal site is outside the Newington Green Conservation Area but the rear part of the site abuts the conservation area boundary.
5. The proposal would involve the erection of a mansard roof extension which would extend the height of the dwelling above the parapet. As the parapet height is a consistent feature of the majority of the dwellings in this terrace, the projection of the extension above the parapet would cause a significant change to the appearance of the terrace. The extension would alter the consistency of the roofscape and result in the dwelling becoming of much greater prominence than the majority of the other dwellings within the terrace.

6. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Council's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (UDG), adopted 2017, which identifies the importance of well-defined rooflines to the rhythm and unity of terraces. It goes on to state that roof extensions should have regard to the particular terrace within which the host building sits as well as the local context and that successful proposals will be both sympathetic to the host building and harmonise with the predominant roofline in the vicinity.
7. Conversely, the UDG appears to allow alterations to consistent and unbroken rooflines that are visible from the public realm, outside of conservation areas, provided that they are designed in a style that is appropriate to the host building. The mansard is consistent with the detailed design guidance that is also contained within the UDG.
8. In this case, having full regard to the content of the UDG, the proposal would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the terrace as it would make one dwelling noticeably taller than any other within the long line of dwellings that have a consistent parapet. The disruption of the well-defined roofline would cause harm to the character and appearance of the terrace and reduce its contribution to the appearance of the surrounding area.
9. The taller buildings at each end of the terrace are viewed as distinctly separate buildings that are distinguishable from the uninterrupted group. They do not therefore disrupt the parapet and the roofline to the same extent and their presence does not alter the incongruous appearance that the proposed roof extension would have as part of this terrace.
10. A similar development has occurred at 31 Leconfield Road which was granted planning permission at appeal¹ in 2017, with regard being had to the UDG. However, the context of that site is different as it is part of a shorter terrace, the roofscape of which had already been altered by the addition of an equally wide group of dwellings that have recessed pitched roofs. In contrast, the appeal site is part of a longer group of dwellings that feature a consistent parapet height and the roofline has not been varied to the same extent. 31 Leconfield Road is not viewed in the same context as the appeal site and therefore, whilst there are substantial similarities to the proposals, I do not find that the effect on the character and appearance of their respective terraces would be the same.
11. There would be minimal views of the extension from within the Newington Green Conservation Area, with views only likely to be possible from the rear of buildings that are not in the public domain. As such, whilst I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area, in this case the proposal would have no effect.
12. For these reasons, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The development is therefore contrary to policies CS8 and CS9 of Islington's Core Strategy (2011) and policy DM2.1 of the Islington Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2013) which combine to require that the scale of development reflects the character of the area, that development fits into the existing context of facades and that all development is of high quality

¹ APP/V5570/D/17/3168517

and respects and responds positively to existing buildings, the streetscape and the wider context. I have also found the proposal to be contrary to part of the guidance contained within the UDG as set out above.

Other Matters

13. The appellant has stated that their aim is to extend the dwelling to provide additional space and improved living conditions for their family, highlighting that they would be required to move if this development does not proceed. It has also been identified that interested parties, who may wish to undertake a similar development, have supported the application. However, based on the evidence before me, I consider that the benefits arising to the appellant do not outweigh the harm that has been identified above in relation to the effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.

Conclusion and Conditions

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

Ian Harrison

INSPECTOR