



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2019

by Elizabeth Pleasant BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/Y/19/3229892

24 Granville Square, Islington, London WC1X 9PD

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
- The appeal is made by Mr Tom Grayson against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
- The application Ref: P2019/0213/LBC, dated 9 January 2019, was refused by a notice dated 7 March 2019.
- The works proposed are described as:

Lower Ground Floor:

Partial excavation of rear garden and removal of 19th century lightwell and 20th century garden steps to accommodate new zinc-clad rear extension with frameless rooflight, to contain a dining room, and connected to new rear lightwell via full-height aluminium sliding doors; Enlargement of existing door opening, and removal of existing non-original French doors, to provide access to the new extension; Removal of lower ground floor sub-standard toilet and replace with utility room with improved headroom; Enlarge existing window opening and cut down to form new door opening to front lightwell and install new glazed painted timber door; Remove and rebuild non-original external wall and door to front lightwell to accommodate new WC.

Ground Floor:

Removal of boiler cupboard and its content, brickwork, brick piers, metal railing, stair landing door, and garden door and enclosing the resultant area with aluminium-framed glazing, with openable window and door, to accommodate a study; Erection of new stainless steel column support in place of the removed brick piers; Installation of new timber internal door to stair landing.

Garden:

Creation of new garden door opening with new painted timber door and infilling existing opening; Relocating existing metal garden side gate to new garden door opening; Raise brick boundary wall to match adjacent property (43 Lloyd Baker Street); Creation of new rear lightwell with natural stone stair and painted metal railing.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. As part of the appeal submission the appellant has submitted an additional drawing Ref, dNA GSR 02 102 Rev P1 to show the proposed side elevation of the outrigger which had been omitted from the original submission. In addition, amended drawing Ref, dNA GSR 03 101 Rev P3 has been submitted

together with a Structural Method Statement¹ (SMS) for the construction of the new lightwell. The Council has had an opportunity to comment on the amended and additional drawings/information. It is only appropriate to take the amended drawing into account if no party would be disadvantaged. Having regard to *Wheatcroft (Bernard) Ltd v Secretary of State for the Environment (1982) JPL 37*, it is necessary for me to consider whether the proposed changes would represent a substantial difference compared to the original application. It was held in this judgement that one of the main criteria is whether the development would be so changed by such amendments that to grant permission would deprive those who should have been consulted of the opportunity of consultation.

3. The additional drawing was an omission from the original proposal and the SMS has been provided to deal with the Council's second reason for refusal. The amended drawing shows a small reduction in the room height of the proposed lower ground floor extension. The amended roof height is a minor alteration to the original scheme and the additional drawing and SMS does not alter the original appeal proposal. I do not consider that any party would be prejudiced by my determining the appeal with regard to the amended drawing Ref, dNA GSR 03 101 Rev P3 and I have done so on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case whether the works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of 24 Granville Square.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is an end terraced house built over three floors with a basement. It is grade II listed and forms part of a terrace of 10 houses and attached railings which were first listed in 1972 for their group value. Based on the evidence before me, including the list description, I consider the significance of the appeal property as a heritage asset is in part derived from its origin as part of development of the Lloyd Baker Estate. Granville Square was the final portion of the Estate to be built and the only street to be built in a conventional terrace. The simple and relatively uniform composition of the terrace and the building's plan form and fine architectural details, including its fenestration, first floor full-length sashes with cornices, and individual balconies with cast iron railings all, amongst other things, contribute to its significance. In addition, for this reason, the property makes a positive contribution to the street scene and the New River Conservation Area within which it is situated.
6. The proposal is to extend the lower ground floor at the rear of the property to accommodate a new dining room and connect to the existing family room and kitchen. In addition, the existing brick piers to the closet wing would be removed and replaced by a new shot-peened stainless-steel round supporting column. The external undercroft below the rear outrigger would then be glazed and internalised with aluminium framed glazing to form a new study. The works also include the reconfiguration and alteration of part of the lower ground floor to re-locate the toilet and create a new utility room. Within the garden there would be a new rear light well and some alterations to the existing the garden boundary treatment and the openings within it.

¹ Structural Method Statement, Amatrix Consulting Engineers, ref.18.150 dated 18 October 2018

7. Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72(1) of the Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
8. The existing closet wing/rear outrigger does not form part of the original terraced property. However, despite its external undercroft, it has a robust form and its proportions, details and materials of construction reflect the character and appearance of the original terrace.
9. The lower ground floor extension would extend beyond the rear wall of the closet wing, and by reason of its depth, height and width, the juxtaposition between it and the proposed glazed undercroft to the closet wing would be awkward and appear visually incongruous. The existing property has a significant robust vertical emphasis, and this appearance and simple form is reinforced by its fenestration and materials of construction which contribute to its significance. Despite the extension being at lower ground floor level, its bulk and physical and indeed visual relationship with proposed the glazed undercroft would not to my mind respond to the original proportions and appearance of the existing property, including the closet wing. It would not therefore preserve the building's special interest.
10. Despite some alterations to the lower ground floor of the building, its original plan form and characteristic cellular rooms are still evident. The works would remove a section of the lower ground floor rear wall to open up the existing living space to the new extension and create a large open plan dining/living area. Whilst the existing French style doors are not original, and the loss of historic fabric from the wall would not be substantial in amount, the works would further erode the property's cellular plan form. Furthermore, the depth of the proposed extension would not respect the original proportions of the rooms within the lower ground floor. The works would therefore diminish the building's significance as a heritage asset and the lowering of the ceiling heights as shown in the amended plan would not overcome that harm.
11. In addition to the proposed lower ground floor extension and works to enclose the undercroft of the closet wing, there are a number of other alterations proposed to the building and its garden area, including alterations to windows, doors and the boundary wall, gates and railings. Clearly, those alterations would result in the loss of some historic fabric which would be regrettable. However, with sensitive design, detailing and craftsmanship which could be secured by appropriate conditions, I am satisfied that individually those works would preserve the listed building.
12. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of the development on the significance of the designated heritage assets, great importance should be given to their conservation. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets.
13. Taking into account all of the above, some aspects of the works would individually constitute minimal or negligible impact on the significance and special interest of the listed building. However, the overall impact of the proposed scheme would be, in the context of the significance of the asset as a

whole and in the language of the Framework, less than substantial. In those circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework says that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

14. The proposed works would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building, 24 Granville Square. Even though I have found that the harm to the designated heritage asset is less than substantial, it is not to be treated as a less than substantial objection to the proposal. There are no public benefits, including providing improved accommodation for the appellant, that would outweigh the considerable importance and weight to the given to the harm to the heritage asset.
15. I conclude that the proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 192 of the Framework. I also find conflict with Policy CS9 of Islington Council's Core Strategy (adopted 2011), Policy DM2.3 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies (adopted 2013) and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan, 2016 which seek to ensure, amongst other things, that the historic significance of the Borough's heritage assets are conserved and enhanced.

Other Matters

16. The appeal site also lies within New River Conservation Area (CA) the significance of which is, in my opinion, mainly drawn from the fine architecture of the buildings and Squares which have a consistency of scale, materials, design and detailing derived from their origin as part of the planned residential estates of the New River Company, the Brewer's Company and the Lloyd Baker Estate. The appeal proposal would primarily involve alterations to the lower ground floor of the building in a location which is enclosed from the street by the property's garden wall. The works would not result in a notable change to the significance of the CA as set out above. For these reasons, I agree with the Council that the proposed works would preserve the character and appearance of the CA.
17. A SMS has been submitted with the appeal to address the Council's second reason for refusal. The SMS has been carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Council's Basement Development Supplementary Planning Document, adopted January 2016 (SPD) and demonstrates that the works would not impact substantially on either the local subterranean environment or the built-up surrounding area. I have had regard to the Council's concern that the SMS does not appear to address the impact on significance of the heritage asset through evacuation. However, the SMS demonstrates that the structural integrity of the building would not be materially harmed. Furthermore, the resultant increase in ceiling height to the utility room would be derived from very limited excavation that would take place beneath the closet wing, which was a later addition to the building. For these reasons I am satisfied that the works do not conflict with the Council's SPD.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elizabeth Pleasant

INSPECTOR