



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by Joanna Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/20/3254354

5 Canonbury Park South, Islington, London N1 2JR

- 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 and Mrs Holmes against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2020/0473/FUL, dated 13 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Minor alterations to existing ground floor extension, including raising of the rear parapet and the replacement of doors, windows and roof lights. Construction of a rear dormer window as part of a loft conversion including the installation of conservation rooflight in the flank roofslope.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canonbury Conservation Area (CCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal property at 5 Canonbury Park South is a two-storey, brick, semi-detached dwelling located within the CCA, where an Article 4 (2) direction removes certain permitted development rights. The CCA's significance is largely derived from eighteenth and early nineteenth century properties. However, there are examples of later developments, such as the appeal dwelling and the surrounding pairs of semi-detached properties of similar character and appearance, which contribute positively to the significance of the CCA.
5. The appeal dwelling is primarily seen in context with its villa pair at No 7 and the three adjacent pairs of semi-detached dwellings at Nos 1 – 3, and Nos 9 – 15. Both Nos 5 and 7 have existing rooflights in the rear roofslopes, while No 5 has also been extended at ground floor level. There are some differences in design and fenestration with Nos 3 and 13 having front gables which are repeated on other properties on Canonbury Park North. However, it is the

- symmetry in the hipped roof form and largely unaltered front, side and rear rooflines which remain generally consistent. It is this prominent characteristic which makes a positive contribution to the villa pair at Nos 5 - 7, the immediate street scene and the wider area, as glimpses of the rear roofs of properties on Canonbury Park South can be seen from Canonbury Park North.
6. Paragraph 5.150 of the Islington Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (January 2017) (the SPD) advises that within conservation areas, the roofline is often an important feature contributing to the character of an area and therefore proposals for roof extensions anywhere along an unaltered roofline within a conservation area will not generally be acceptable. Islington's Conservation Area Design Guidelines, A supplement to the UDP, Revised version (January 2002) (the CADG) also advises at paragraph 8.14 that within the CCA, new or enlarged dormer windows or rooflights on the front or side slopes of exposed pitched roofs will not be permitted.
 7. The appeal proposal would include the introduction of a rooflight to the flank roofslope and dormer to the rear roofslope of No 5. Due to its scale and positioning, the proposed dormer would be a dominant addition to the host dwelling and would create a displeasing imbalance to the symmetry of the main roofs of the villa pair. Despite existing planting and mature trees, it would be visible from public viewpoints in gaps between buildings on Canonbury Park North and across private gardens. Although the proposed materials and fenestration design would be sympathetic and would match the existing first floor window, the proposed dormer would appear as a discordant feature in the street scene that would fail to reflect the characteristics of the CCA.
 8. Irrespective of its low-profile conservation design and colour, the proposed rooflight to the flank roofslope would be prominent on the approach to the site from the south west. It would therefore represent an incongruous addition to the host dwelling and its villa pair and would appear at odds with the largely unaltered side rooflines of the surrounding pairs of semi-detached properties.
 9. There have been two previous approvals for a rear dormer and a rooflight at No 5, which pre-date current policy and guidance and were not carried out. Similarly, while other properties, including No 3, have existing rooflights and dormer extensions I have not been provided with the full details of their approvals and cannot therefore be certain that they were approved in a similar policy context to the proposal before me. I therefore consider that the previous approvals at No 5 and the existing rooflights and dormers to other properties would not justify the proposal before me. Furthermore, while the Council and appellant have referred to the possibility of the proposed dormer coalescing with any similar dormer at No 7, no such proposal is before me. Additionally, the lack of harm with regard to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers does not alter my findings with regard to the main issue in this appeal.
 10. In terms of the approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the CCA's significance as a designated heritage asset. The Framework is clear that irrespective of the level of harm, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and, where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

11. It is suggested that the proposal would ensure the continued use of the building, but there is no compelling evidence before me to suggest that the existing use of the property cannot be sustained without the proposed development. As such, the enlargement of the dwelling would provide a private benefit. Therefore, on this basis, there are no demonstrable public benefits that would outweigh the identified harm to the significance of the CCA.
12. Taking all the above into consideration, the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CCA. Consequently, it would conflict with Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (March 2016), Policy CS9 of Islington's Core Strategy (February 2011), Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Policies (June 2013) and the Framework which collectively seek, amongst other things, to ensure developments complement local character and distinctiveness and conserve or enhance the significance of the historic environment. The proposal would also conflict with the guidance within the SPD and CADG as noted above. The appellant has referred to the draft London Plan (Intend to Publish) version (December 2019). As this is not yet adopted and no specific policies have been provided, I have not addressed this Plan in detail.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Joanna Gilbert

INSPECTOR