



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/20/3249286

Flat 3, 37 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NN

- 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 Edward Randall against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2019/5927/P, dated 25 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of an existing rear conservatory on first floor flat and the erection of a replacement new brick-built rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether or not the proposed extension would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is within the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area (the Conservation Area). I therefore have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Area. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (paragraph 184). It goes on to advise that any harm or loss requires clear and convincing justification (paragraph 194) and that any harm that is less than substantial must be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal (paragraph 196).
4. The Conservation Area is predominantly residential in character. It primarily consists of large detached and semi-detached houses of a variety of architectural styles, in a verdant setting on the slopes west and south west of the historic centre of Hampstead Village. Its significance derives in part from its status as a well-preserved prosperous late Victorian and Edwardian suburb.
5. No 37 is an Arts and Crafts style semi-detached house designed by the architect Charles Quennell, as were many other buildings throughout the Conservation Area. It presents three storeys to the street and, because of the

sloping site, four to the rear garden. At some point in the past the property has been divided into four self-contained flats.

6. The appeal property, Flat 3, is at first floor level, and has a conservatory at the rear which projects around 2.1m beyond the main rear elevation above a room of the ground floor flat below. The proposal is to replace it with an extension would be approximately 3m deep, with height and width the same as the existing conservatory. Although the appellant argues that a significant portion of the proposed extension would be glazed, the submitted plans and other information clearly show that the flank walls would be predominantly brick, although they would both include windows. There would be full-height glazed sliding doors on its rear elevation, and it would have a tiled roof with inset glazed panels.
7. The extension would be larger in volume than the present conservatory, and the use of brick would give it a more solid appearance which would make it a bulky and prominent addition to the building. These effects would be exacerbated by the slope of the land away from the building at the rear, which would increase the relative height and prominence of the extension. It would be visible from Briardale Gardens through the substantial gap between No 2B and the rear of 39 Platt's Lane, from where its elevation, bulk and massing would make it an incongruous addition to the Conservation Area.
8. It is common ground between the main parties that there have been unsympathetic additions to buildings throughout the Conservation Area. This is reinforced by the 2003 Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area Statement, which makes specific reference to the group of properties on Platt's Lane between Briardale Gardens and Clorane Gardens including the appeal site. The appellant suggests that this is largely because the use of materials other than brick has been permitted. However, based on what I saw at the time of my site visit I consider that there are various other contributing factors including the scale, siting and detailed design of extensions. While I acknowledge that the conservatory as it currently exists is not especially in keeping with the prevailing character and appearance of the wider area, in my view the bulk and prominence of the proposed extension would represent a worsening of this situation rather than an improvement.
9. The appellant already has planning permission to replace the existing conservatory with a structure of around the same size as that now before me¹. However, that permission is for a timber framed conservatory. As a consequence it would be 'lighter' and less prominent in appearance, and in my view therefore less harmful, than the current proposal. The appellant has also drawn my attention to an extension at No 31 Platt's Lane. However, that extension is in a recess alongside the flank wall of a rear outrigger rather than a projection beyond the main rear elevation. Furthermore, while I was able to see that extension from the street through the gap between the rear of 29 Platt's Lane and 1 Clorane Gardens, it appeared to be in a less elevated position relative to the surrounding gardens and street than the scheme now before me. Overall it is less prominent and intrusive than the extension in this case would be, and its presence carries very limited weight in favour of allowing this appeal.

¹ Camden reference 2019/1110/P

10. I therefore conclude that the proposed extension would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area. Given the size of the Conservation Area as a whole, in the Framework's terms the harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset would be less than substantial. However, no public benefits arising from the scheme to weigh against this harm have been identified.
11. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies D1 and D2 of the 2017 Camden Local Plan, which together seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality design which contributes positively in complementing local character, whilst preserving or enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets including conservation areas. The proposal also conflicts with the provisions of the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Conclusion

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

M Cryan

Inspector