



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 January 2021

by D Szymanski BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/20/3260635

Flat C, 20 Northwood Road, Hornsey, London N6 5TN

- 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 Ainhua Abreu Diaz against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2020/1407, dated 9 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is Erection of dormer extension to the rear slope of the roof, insertion of 3 roof lights to the front roof slope and replacement of roof terrace door.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the original planning application form. The development was the subject of amended plans to, amongst other things, reduce the size of the rear dormer and reduce the number of front rooflights to two. The Council considered the proposal on the basis of the amended scheme and so shall I.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host building and the terrace; and, whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises the second to end terrace in a row of similar mainly four storey buildings. The appeal site and surrounding buildings are within the Highgate Conservation Area (the HCA). Within the HCA there is a statutory duty under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The HCA is extensive in area deriving significance from pleasant streets and collections of well-preserved mostly historic buildings, maturely landscaped green spaces, and street trees.
5. Although they have been subject to some alterations, on Northwood Road this part of the HCA derives its significance from the rhythm and consistency of

well-preserved attractive terraced buildings. Although the appeal site frontage is painted, the site, wider terrace, and similar terrace opposite retain several historic features and details. As well as the railings mentioned in the HCA Character and Management Plan (2013) (the HCACMP) the appeal site terrace exhibits a distinctive arrangement of window openings across each floor, corbelling, parapet walls and guttering, and well-preserved gable and cross gable roof forms, stepped down in pairs, which all contribute positively to its significance. The contribution of the appeal site is as part of a well preserved building displaying the aforementioned features, making a positive contribution to the rhythm and appearance of the terrace and HCA.

6. The development would significantly raise the main ridge line and introduce two different pitches on the front and rear slope. The higher roof ridge would visibly disrupt and unbalance the distinctive sequenced pairs of aligned roofs, which are at the same heights either side of the diving parapet with No 18. Despite having been reduced in size, the rear dormer would occupy most of the width of the appeal site roof, protruding up to approximately 3.2m in depth and 2.1m in height from the roof slope.
7. The position, width, depth, and shape of the dormer would be considerably at odds with the shape of the roof, and alignment and proportions of the traditional window openings on the western side of the rear elevation. The dormer and alterations would be of such a scale that they would considerably modify and dominate the rear roof slope, having the appearance of being somewhat awkward and incongruent in the context of this terrace of largely unmodified double stepped roofs.
8. The positioning, materials, and appearance of the front rooflights would be a discernible alteration to the traditional simple front roof slope, being visible from the opposite footway and part of Holmesdale Road. They would not be in keeping with and harmful to the terrace. The finishing of the new roof slopes in slate would not sufficiently mitigate the harm from the scheme.
9. There is no stated harm in the reason for refusal from the new rear doorway. However, this would not mitigate the harm from the development as a whole. Therefore, the development would not be in keeping with and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the terrace, and the significance of the HCA, which would be visible from sizeable sections of footway to the front and rear, on Northwood Road, Holmesdale Road, Langdon Park Road and Milton Park, including a limited number of properties, more so when the trees are not in full leaf.
10. There a limited number roof extensions and roof lights in the wider area. The full details and circumstances that lead to the approval of most are not before me, so a direct and fully reasoned comparison is not possible. Those I could see were limited in number and do not form an overriding or positive characteristic of this part of the HCA. The developments, including one at No 44, are on different terraces, some of which have been the subject of other extensions or modifications, and the visibility and effect on the HCA differs to the appeal proposal. The position of No 44 means it has a more limited visibility from the street scene. Such developments are not visible on the appeal site terrace of well-preserved roofs. Their existence does not justify allowing this appeal proposal.

11. For the reasons set out above the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building, terrace, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the HCA, adversely impacting upon its significance. Therefore, it would result in a conflict with Policies 3.5, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), Policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017), Policies DM1, DM9 and DM12 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) and Policies DH2 and DH5 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017). In combination and amongst other things, these require development is of a high quality design that is complementary to, in keeping with and makes a positive contribution the character and appearance of the area, the historic environment, and shall conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets.
12. Subject to the imposition of suitable planning conditions, the development might be compliant with some other aspects of development plan policies and objectives, the HCACMP, and aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (the Framework) in respect of design, such as the materials. However, this does not mitigate or alleviate the other harm I have found.
13. Paragraph 193 of the Framework requires when considering the impact upon the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 194). The harm set out above would be less than substantial harm. Paragraph 196 of the Framework requires that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits. However, less than substantial harm should not be equated with a less than substantial planning objection.
14. There is no objection from the Council in respect of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. This would be a neutral effect. Providing additional accommodation to create a family size dwelling to optimise its use, further natural light, thermal performance, natural slates, and roof renewal may be consistent with some development plan objectives and policies. However, in the context of this single dwelling scheme they are small public benefits. There would also be a minor economic benefit from construction. However, the collective public benefits of the development attract limited weight, which does not outweigh the significant harm from the proposal, which attracts great weight. Therefore, the development also conflicts with the Framework.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development would be contrary to the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no other considerations advanced, including the policies of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal should not succeed.

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR