
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 April 2021

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/D/20/3264680

31 Alexandra Park Road, London, N10 2DD

- 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 Mike and Georgina Sergeant against the decision of Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2020/2232, dated 2 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is Rear roof extensions and roof lights to the front roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council's reason for refusing the application refers to Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), which relate to the historic environment and the quality of design and its contribution to local character. That plan has since been superseded by the London Plan 2021 (LP) which was published in March 2021. Policies D3 and HC1 of the LP set similar requirements for development with respect to historic assets and the quality of design and how it responds to local character. I have therefore determined the appeal with regard to Policies D3 and HC1 and am satisfied that neither party will be caused an injustice by taking this approach.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a 2 storey end of terrace dwelling within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area.
 5. The terrace comprises 4 houses. The key features contributing to their character and appearance from the front of the properties are: 2 storey bays; recessed porches; and parapet party walls dividing the roofs. The ground floor
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bays are canted and have half hipped roofs. The first floor bays are box bays with a gable pitched roof extending to just below the main roof ridge. The key features at the rear of the properties are relatively deep 2 storey out rigger extensions. These join those of neighbouring properties sharing a pitched roof that is stepped down from the main roof. The appeal property has an existing rear dormer that projects from the main roof. It sits on a small part of the outrigger roof where it joins the main roof.

6. The rear gardens of several properties on Alexandra Park Road extend directly on to Muswell Hill Avenue. This enables views from the street across to the rear of the houses, including the appeal site. The rear of the appeal site will also be visible from the rear of some properties along Alexandra Park Road and Muswell Hill Avenue.
7. The proposed development would include rooflights either side of the pitched gable roof on the front elevation. None of the houses within the terrace had rooflights in this position, although elsewhere along the road I saw rooflights on two gable roofs, but not on both sides. As such they would appear out of keeping with the majority of properties within the area, although the appellant has indicated that they would be willing to remove that element of the scheme.
8. The proposal includes replacing the existing rear dormer. The replacement would be slightly wider and higher, extending down closer to the eaves of the main roof. Part of it would project 3.3 metres out onto the outrigger roof. The appellant has provided examples of outrigger roof extensions approved by the Council, the most similar being at 51 and 53 Windermere Road. However, in both cases the extensions appear not to project as far along the outrigger roofs as the proposed development and were stepped down from the main dormer roof creating a degree of subservience. As such they are not directly comparable. Also, trees and outbuildings in the rear gardens of properties, to an extent, obscure views of the rear of the houses from the street such that the visual impact is less than would be the case with the proposed development. In any case, I have come to my own view regarding the development rather than relying on the approach the Council may have taken elsewhere.
9. There are rear dormer roof extensions on houses along Alexandra Park Road from the appeal site terrace towards the junction with Muswell Hill Avenue. These sit within the main roof plane. Due to the angle of Alexandra Park Road looking away from the junction, and the slight incline downhill from the junction towards the appeal site, the existing dormers appear set down and set in from each neighbour. As a result, despite their different designs, there is a certain rhythm which would be broken by the proposed rear roof extension projecting beyond the main roof along the outrigger and at the same height as the main dormer. As such, it would harm the appearance of the host dwelling and wider roofscape within the vicinity of the appeal site and thus the appearance of the CA.
10. Given the small scale of the development within the context of the CA as a whole, it would not harm its character. There would however be harm in terms of its appearance. The harm would be localised, limited and less than

substantial but would nevertheless be contrary to Policies D3 and HC1 of the LP, Policy SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies 2013 to 2026 (2017) and Policies DM1, DM9 and DM12 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) and the London Borough of Haringey Conservation Area No. 3 Muswell Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2008) which require development to conserve or enhance the historic environment, complement the form of original buildings and not appear visually intrusive.

11. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires justification and, in accordance with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework, I must weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. Although no public benefits have been put forward by the appellant, there would be modest benefits arising from short term employment during its construction. However, such benefits would not outweigh the harm to the appearance of the building and the CA that I have identified.

Other Matters

12. Representations raised concerns regarding privacy and outlook. However, these concerns relate to plans which were subsequently amended to reduce the depth of the outrigger extension and remove the side windows. I agree with the Council that the revised scheme would cause no overlooking or loss of privacy to occupants of neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

13. I have considered all other matters raised in support of the appeal, including the internal improvements to the building such as improving access to the roof space which is currently poor. However, for the reasons above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR