



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2021 by Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu BSc MSc MIEMA CEnv AssocRTPI

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/21/3272913

48 St Paul Street, Islington, London N1 7DA

- 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 John Cassels against the decision of the Council of London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2021/0385/FUL, dated 5 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is addition of a small roof extension at the rear not visible from the street.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Council's decision describes the proposal as a single-storey roof extension and associated alterations. This description is a more accurate reflection of the act of development for which permission is sought, as the question of whether the proposal would be visible or not is a matter of opinion as opposed to an act of development. I have assessed the proposal on the basis of the Council's description.

Main Issue

4. The appeal site is located within the Arlington Square Conservation Area (the 'CA'). The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property, which is a locally listed building, and whether it would conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. No. 48 is a three-storey terraced dwelling located on St Paul Street in the Islington area of London. The surrounding area is characterised by similar three-storey dwellings with roof parapets and butterfly roofs at the rear. The terrace block which the host building is a part of (Nos 42-64) is locally listed on

account of its important group and street value. There is a high degree of consistency within the block in terms of the materials, fenestration and building form which provides a pleasing symmetry and coherence with neighbouring streets. The parapet roof and rear roof form play an important role in that original design.

6. Though the proposed roof extension would only be slightly visible at the front by virtue of being setback, at the rear it would be quite visible from the gap between the terraces to St Paul Street and Coleman Fields. The flat roof would result in a box like profile that would be set higher than the parapet of the building and would disrupt the original butterfly roof form which forms an integral element in the character to the rear of the terrace row. Consequently, on account of its unsympathetic profile, scale and visible location the extension would be discordant feature that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property as well as the terrace block.
7. Islington's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (January 2017) states that *'in addition to responding to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development, new buildings must also respect the height of the surrounding context. Where uniform building heights form a distinctive character, major variations to this will not normally be appropriate as such locations are generally sensitive to alteration.'* Additionally, Islington's Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002) (the 'CADG') states that construction of roof extensions is considered damaging to the architectural unity of the area and the character and appearance of the conservation area¹. For the reasons given above, the proposal would fail to reflect the locally distinctive style of the block and would harm the townscape quality of the CA area on account of its unsympathetic design.
8. There is a prominent roof extension at no. 60 St Paul Street which is of the same block as the host property. It is visible from both long views on St Paul Street. There is also a rear box dormer at no. 52 as well, which is visible from the gap between the terraces to St Paul Street and Coleman Fields. These are examples of discordant additions to the roofline. It is unclear if planning permission was granted for these schemes, but they appear to be of some vintage and I cannot be certain that the same policy considerations applied. In any event, the presence of those unsympathetic additions only serves to highlight the harm that would be caused, and their presence does not justify further degradation of the quality of what remains and attractive row.
9. The appellant also refers to a recently approved similar scheme at no.24 St Paul Street². The CADG states that new roof extensions visible to the street will only be allowed on those terraces where a significant number have already been allowed, with the intention of eventually completing a new and harmonious roof line on these terraces. The block of which no. 24 is a part of has more mansard roof extensions which are visible from the street at nos. 20, 28, 36, 38 and 40. This suggest a significant number on this block as compared to the block which the appeal proposal is part of. Furthermore, no.24 is mid-terrace as compared with the appeal property which lies closer to the end of the terrace at the junction with Coleman Fields. Thus, there would be more significant views to the appeal scheme.

¹ Paragraph 4.9

² P2018/2859/FUL

10. Nevertheless, each proposal should be assessed according to its own merits and the existence of other similar development is not a strong enough reason to justify visually harmful development. The proposal would have a visually harmful effect upon the host property and its group.
11. The harm caused would be less than substantial nevertheless is of considerable importance and weight. In line with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework I am required to balance that harm against any public benefits of the proposal. Roof extensions can add valuable floorspace but enlarging the property would primarily benefit the appellant, as opposed to having wider public benefits. There is nothing to indicate that the existing layout provides poor quality of accommodation and I give limited weight to the enhanced living environment argument put forward by the appellant. Consequently, that matter does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the building and the wider CA.
12. Consequently, I find that the proposed rear roof extensions and dormers would fail to conserve or enhance the character or appearance of the dwelling and the CA. Accordingly, the scheme would conflict with Policies D1 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies CS8 and CS9 of Islington's Core Strategy (February 2011) and Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies (June 2013). These amongst other things seek to ensure that alterations to existing buildings in conservation areas conserve or enhance their significance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and on that basis, I agree with the recommendation and shall dismiss the appeal.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR