



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 22 September 2021 by Hilary Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/21/3278431

Flat A, 31 Almorah Road, Islington, London, N1 3ER

- 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 Mrs Sarah Randall against the decision of London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2021/0547/FUL, dated 22 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of roof extension.
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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 the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host and neighbouring dwellings and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the East Canonbury Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located within the East Canonbury CA. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. The CA is characterised by regular and harmonious terraces of residential properties with valley roofs behind front parapets.
5. No 31 Almorah Road is a mid terrace property. The roof is a traditional V-shaped, or butterfly roof, with raised parapet walls to the front elevation and a box structure to part of the rear elevation. The appeal property, and the terrace in which it is situated, makes a positive contribution to the character of the CA, due in part to the mainly uniform appearance and consistent roofline which creates a rhythm to the street.
6. Apart from the small roof additions to three dwellings within the terrace, the roofline retains a consistent and unaltered appearance with the characteristic butterfly roof maintained throughout. The new extension would add height and massing to the building, at a larger scale than the existing roof additions,

creating a bulky roofscape to the property that would be out of character with its original form. Moreover, the window design proposed on the rear elevation would not reflect the symmetry and design of the existing fenestration of the property. The proposal would further erode the traditional roof form of the host dwelling and the terrace of which it forms part and would significantly reduce the contribution that these properties make to the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset.

7. I acknowledge that within Almorah Road, the proposal would not be readily apparent at ground level as it would be set back from the parapet walls. However, it would be visible from the upper floor windows of properties opposite, and the rear of the proposal would be visible from the rear gardens of neighbouring properties, from where it would be viewed as an alien addition and would be likely to reduce the appreciation nearby occupiers have of the quality of the environment within which they live.
8. My attention has been drawn to examples of roof extensions in the local area. I am unconvinced that these developments are directly comparable to the proposal before me given the different roof styles of the properties and their immediate context. In addition, I am not aware of the circumstances that led to their approval. In any event, I have determined this appeal on its own merits based on the site-specific circumstances of the case.
9. I note the appellant's desire to increase the size of the property's living accommodation, however it is unlikely that the proposal is the only option available to provide this. This therefore limits the weight that I can give this matter in my overall assessment of the case.
10. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host and neighbouring dwellings and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the East Canonbury CA, in conflict with policy CS9 of the Islington Core Strategy (2011) and policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of the Islington Development Management Policies (2013). Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and respects the character of the area. There would also be conflict with the guidance on roof extensions within the Urban Design Guidelines (2017) and CA Design Guidelines (2002), which whilst supportive of such development in certain circumstances, seeks to restrict them in conservation areas where the existing roof profile contributes to an area's character. The proposal also conflicts with the statutory tests set out in the Act and the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
11. As the proposal relates to only a small part of the Conservation Area and recognising that it would not be prominent in the public realm, the harm that would arise from the proposal, in terms of the approach in the Framework, would be less than substantial. In these circumstances the Framework advises at paragraph 202 that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
12. Whilst I accept that the extension would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant and her family to enable them to reconfigure the internal living space and remain in the area, this is a private, rather than a public benefit in favour of the proposal.

13. I conclude therefore that there are no public benefits which outweigh the less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with the conserving and enhancing the historic environment objectives of the Framework.

Other Matters

14. I acknowledge that the proposal would make effective use of land as supported by the Framework, however this would be at the expense of the character and appearance of the area and the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset. The reference to the Framework and the Council's Design Guidelines as set out above are noted, however these documents, along with the development plan need to be read as a whole, and for the reasons set out above I have found conflict. These matters do not lead me to conclude otherwise.
15. I acknowledge the appellant's frustration with the application process and the Council in determining the application. Whilst this is unfortunate, these matters are outside the scope of this appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework, that outweigh this conflict. I therefore recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hilary Senior

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR