



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 February 2022 by M Long

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/22/3291030

5 Old Stable Mews, Islington, London N5 2LR

- 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 D Chan against the decision of The London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2021/2594/FUL, dated 3 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front extension and a loft conversion by raising the eaves.
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Decision

1. The part of the appeal that relates to the loft conversion is dismissed.
2. The part of the appeal that relates to the single storey front extension is allowed. Planning permission is granted for a single storey front extension at 5 Old Stable Mews, Islington, London N5 2LR, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: P2021/2594/FUL, dated 3 September 2021, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: drawing no. 203, drawing no. 204 and drawing no. 100 (Site Location Plan), only in so far as they relate to the single storey front extension.
 - 3) The walling materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the single storey front extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

3. 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

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed loft conversion and single storey front extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is located in a backland Mews development which consists of two terraces of similar architectural style that are in a near-perpendicular

arrangement. The appeal dwelling is a two-storey, end-of-terrace property with a front courtyard area that has tall boundary treatments. It is located in a secluded position behind the front building line of the other terrace and there are some views of its side and rear from Herrick Road. The property forms part of a terrace that is characterised by a general uniformity, including a regular fenestration pattern and gable features on the front elevation that extend above the eaves. The terrace remains largely in its original form, however there is a large two-storey side extension at No 1 which has a modestly set down the roof line. The backland development is surrounded by tall Victorian terraces, I noted that these terraces have a substantial number of large roof extensions which vary in architectural design and materials.

Loft conversion

6. The proposed loft extension would create an additional level of accommodation at the appeal property by raising the roofline and eaves. The proposal would incorporate the addition of two window openings which would straddle the eaves being set within both part of the front elevation and roof slope.
7. The raised roofline and eaves would be an incongruous feature along the terrace that would detract from its broadly uniform character. The proposed design would result in the existing gable feature being set against a large amount of brickwork. This would disrupt the terrace's established pattern of gable features that extend above the eaves. Moreover, the windows at eaves level would introduce an unusual design to this area which, when viewed in the context of the existing fenestration, would appear as discordant additions that would detract from the terrace's appearance.
8. The roofscapes of the surrounding Victorian terraces include a substantial number of roof extensions which form part of the character of these terraces. In contrast, the two Mews terraces largely retain their original roofscape and it is within this context that the proposal would be viewed as a discordant addition. Given its significant height, the additional bulk at roof level would be an overly prominent intervention that would be visible from within the Mews development, the surrounding properties and at points along Herrick Road. While end-of-terrace properties may allow for forms of development that would be inappropriate in the mid-terrace, in this instance, the proposed extension's step-up would have a dominant design that would not convey the same sense of subservience of the stepped-down roofline on the extension at No 1.
9. I have had regard to the large roof extensions at nearby terraced dwellings, including details of the schemes at Nos 11 and 25 Mountgrove Road. The proposal, however, must be considered in the context of the surrounding Mews development, which is not characterised by large roof extensions. The planning considerations of these other examples do not appear to be directly comparable and, in any event, each case must be determined on its own individual merits.
10. Given the above, the proposed loft conversion would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies, adopted June 2013, specifically Policy DM2.1 which seeks to ensure that development proposals respond positively to existing buildings and the wider context, including local architectural language and character. There would also be conflict with Islington's Core Strategy, adopted February 2011, specifically Policy CS8 which seeks to ensure the scale of development reflects the character of the area and

Policy CS9 which seeks to ensure all development is based on coherent street frontages. Although the Council have mentioned conflict with Policy D4 of The London Plan, adopted March 2021, this Policy primarily focuses on the design process and scrutiny and does not appear directly relevant to the modest nature of the appeal scheme.

Single storey front extension

11. The proposed front extension would cover a substantial width of the property's front elevation at ground floor level. It would be set back from the boundary with neighbouring No 4 and would extend to the northern boundary shared with No 6. It would also include a flat roof with a lantern rooflight.
12. As the extension would be set behind the front building line of the adjacent terrace and occupy a low height, it would have a secluded location within the Mews development. The existing views of the courtyard area are dominated by the tall brick wall along the western boundary and the addition of the ground floor extension would not harmfully detract from the built character of this area. Given its limited size and set back from No 4, the proposal would maintain a subservient relationship with the host dwelling and wider terrace. While the extension would disrupt the established building line and reduce the terrace's level of uniformity, its limited height and secluded end-of-terrace position would sufficiently mitigate any harm to the character and appearance of the area.
13. For the above reasons, the proposed single storey front extension would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore accord with Policy DM2.1 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies which seeks to ensure development respects and responds positively to existing buildings and the wider context. It would also accord with Islington's Core Strategy, in particular Policy CS8 which seeks to ensure the scale of development reflects the character of the area and Policy CS9 which seeks to ensure all development is based on coherent street frontages. As mentioned above, Policy D4 of The London Plan does not appear directly relevant to the modest nature of the appeal scheme.

Other Matters

14. The proposed development would improve the living conditions of the occupiers at the appeal property. However, this is a private benefit that can only be given limited weight which would not outweigh the harm identified above with regard to the loft extension.
15. While there is Government legislation to support upwards extensions as well as language within Islington's Core Strategy to support the provision of accommodation suitable for families, the proposal must be considered in the context of all relevant policies in the development plan. Any potential benefits of the scheme would accrue to an individual private dwelling and would not outweigh the significant harm identified to the character and appearance of the area.
16. Concerns have been raised regarding the proposal's effect on the living conditions of the surrounding residents. However, these predominantly relate to the proposed roof extension and not the single storey front extension. In any event, given the low height of the ground floor extension and the existing

courtyard's tall boundary treatments, the ground floor extension would not result in undue harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring residents. Furthermore, its modest overall footprint, in combination with its secluded position, would not constitute overdevelopment in this location.

Conditions

17. In addition to the standard time period for commencement of the development, I recommend a condition requiring the development to accord with the approved plans as this provides certainty. I also recommend that matching external walling materials are used for the single storey front extension to preserve the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Conclusion and Recommendation

18. Based on the above and because the proposed single storey front extension is severable from the proposed loft conversion a split decision can be issued. I recommend that in relation to the single storey front extension the appeal should be allowed but that the loft conversion element should be dismissed.

M Long

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis, I agree that a split decision should be issued as set out above.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR