



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 March 2022

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons) PgDip

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/21/3286307

30A Almorah Road, Islington, London N1 3EU

- 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 Hakan Agca against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2021/0847/FUL, dated 18 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of roof extension and associated alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. For clarity and succinctness, I have used the Council's description of development in this decision.
3. Since determination of the planning application, the 2019 iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) has been superseded. I am satisfied that the updates to the Framework do not materially affect its content insofar as it is relevant to the main issue of this appeal. I have therefore determined this appeal with regard to the current version, published in July 2021.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the East Canonbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a mid-terrace residential property, located within the East Canonbury Conservation Area (CA). The CA is characterised by wide attractive streets, which are lined with tall period terraced properties which are set back from the pavement, typically with lightwells and walls/railings to basement areas. The terraced properties are largely consistent in their design, sharing rigid front buildings lines and consistent roof lines, all of which contribute to an overarching sense of uniformity and symmetry. The uniformity and symmetry contribute positively to both the character and the significance of the CA.

6. Whilst roof design is mixed along the wider terrace, there are distinct groupings of properties within the terrace, each with their own sense of visual coherence. In terms of the appeal property, it sits within a section of the terrace (being nos. 26-32 (even only) Almorah Road), which is typified by valley or “butterfly style” roofs. Commensurate with the prevailing character of the CA, this group of dwellings has not been extended at roof level, which gives them a clean and attractive ridge line, contributing to their overriding sense of uniformity.
7. The Council’s Urban Design Guide (2017) (Design Guide) is explicit that *“butterfly parapet profiles are a strong characteristic of rooflines in Islington and where these survive they should be retained”*. Whilst the proposed development would retain the original valley roof, the new pitched roof extension would sit above. This would significantly dilute its butterfly profile, which in turn would detract from the historic fabric of the building. Moreover, the additional height and bulk of the new extension would disrupt the clear and established ridge line of this group of properties, thereby appearing prominent and discordant within the prevailing roofscape. Whilst I acknowledge this wouldn’t necessarily be apparent at street level, the visual disruption would be readily experienced within the upper floors of neighbouring properties along the road as well as those to the rear of the appeal dwelling, and would therefore still be harmful.
8. For these reasons, I consider that the development would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. Consequently, the development would also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Whilst I consider this harm would be less than substantial as it would only affect a small part of the CA, as per the Framework, great weight must be attributed to any harm to a heritage asset (in this case the CA), irrespective of whether such harm is “less than substantial” or otherwise.
9. Set against this harm, the proposal would modernise the existing roof, improving its sustainability credentials. Nonetheless, this could invariably still be achieved without the proposed extension, and therefore this benefit only carries limited weight. In terms of the increased space, whilst I appreciate it would provide much needed living space for the appellant’s family, this would primarily be a private benefit, and so in itself cannot weigh on my decision. Unfortunately, this means there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm identified.
10. The development would therefore conflict with Policies D1, D4 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), which together seek to ensure development achieves high quality design, which responds properly to local character and which conserves the significance of heritage assets. Similarly, the development would conflict with Policies CS8 and CS9 of Islington’s Core Strategy (2011) and Policies DM2.1 and DM2.3 of Islington’s Local Plan: Development Management Policies (2013), all of which require new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, whilst ensuring the historic fabric of Islington’s unique heritage assets is conserved and enhanced. The development would breach guidance set out in the Design Guide and Islington’s Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002) (CA Design Guidelines), which resist roof extensions which would upset the rhythm and uniformity of prevailing unaltered rooflines. Finally, the development would conflict with the

overarching objectives of the Framework, which places a great emphasis on the preservation of historic environment.

Other Matters

11. Even though there are numerous examples of roof extensions in close proximity to the appeal site, the section of terrace in which the appeal property is located is rare, as it retains a series of unaltered butterfly roofs which are specifically noted for their importance within the CA. This distinguishes it from other parts of the terrace (as well as other terraces in the area), as its distinct historic character and uniformity contributes positively to the character of the CA, and therefore warrants protection.
12. Whilst I acknowledge that the CA Design Guidelines do not preclude roof extensions entirely, particularly where they will not be visible from the street, unfortunately the proposed extension in this instance would jar with the prevailing roofscape of its neighbouring properties, and would therefore give rise to harm to the character of the CA.

Conclusion

13. The development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, that would outweigh this finding. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR