



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2023

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/22/3306411

Flat 3A Poets Road, Islington, London N5 2SL

- 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 N Head against the decision of London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2022/2335/FUL, dated 15 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Erection of bicycle and bin stores to the front (retrospective)'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of bicycle and bin stores to the front of 3A Poets Road, London, N5 2SL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P2022/2335/FUL, dated 15 June 2022, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted is as per the following approved plans: Site Location Plan, Existing & Proposed Block Plan: Drawing No. PL-01 Rev B; Plan View and Elevations: Drawing No. 00BB-GA100-02rev00; and 3D Model Views: Drawing No. 109BB-GA 100-03rev00.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application was made on a retrospective basis and the bicycle/bin store was present on my site visit. Accordingly, I have determined the appeal on the basis of development that has already occurred.
3. The Council through the appeal has referred to emerging Policy PLAN1 of the Islington Draft Local Development Plan (draft Local Plan). I understand that the draft Local Plan is at a rather advanced stage having been through examination whilst consultation has also taken place on suggested main modifications to the plan. However, I have little detail of the outcome of the consultation or whether amendments to draft Policy PLAN1 were proposed. Therefore, I afford only modest weight to the emerging Local Plan in my consideration of the proposal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reason

5. The appeal site is located on a section of Poets Road that is characterised by three storey terraced properties that share a general uniformity in appearance. It appears that several of the properties, including the appeal site, have been sub-divided into flats. The properties are set back from the public highway by modest front gardens.
6. Along this section of the street, the front boundary treatments predominantly comprise of low boundary walls with a mixture of railings, fencing or vegetation above. The boundary walls vary in appearance including different exposed brickwork and render finishes, as well as having differing heights and pillar arrangements. As such, the front boundary treatments within the streetscene are not particularly consistent in style or appearance. Likewise, there is also a mix of boundary treatments to residential properties in nearby neighbouring streets.
7. The appeal development whilst providing a bicycle and bin store also has been deliberately designed to also act as a boundary fence to the property. The development is of a contemporary design. It has been complete with quality materials to a fine standard of finish. This has resulted in a high-quality design of development that is unapologetically different to existing front boundary treatments on Poets Road.
8. Although the development is taller and bulkier than neighbouring boundary arrangements, it is not excessively so, and it does not fragment the streetscene. The architectural details of the Victorian property can also for the most part still be viewed and appreciated. Furthermore, despite being bulkier than neighbouring boundary treatments, the structure's use of timber batons and incorporation of plant containers help to soften its appearance. I therefore find that the scale and massing of the development does not dominate the streetscene and is not overbearing when passing by.
9. Overall, whilst the development contrasts with neighbouring boundary treatments, I consider it to be of an appropriate high-quality design that complements the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. The development therefore accords with Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan (adopted 2021) and Policy DM2.1 of the Islington Development Management Delivery Plan Document (adopted 2013). Together, amongst other matters, these policies seek for the delivery of high-quality design, including that new developments make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of an area. The proposal also accords with the general aims outlined within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Islington Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2017) in respect of promoting high standards of design.
10. Although not referred to within the decision notice, I find that the proposal would also accord with the overall aims of Policy Plan1 of the draft Local Plan. Namely, it is development of a high quality that makes a positive contribution to the local character of the area.

Other Matters

11. It has been highlighted that there is an existing cycle store near the appeal site, albeit the appellants contend that there is an extensive waiting list for its

use. However, I have not been provided with any policy basis on which the need for the development has to be demonstrated. As such, the presence of the nearby facility has had little bearing on my decision.

12. The appellant has provided an extensive list of bike storage schemes that sit to the front of buildings within London and have received planning permission. I have been provided with very limited details of those cases. However, information provided by the Council indicate that the examples provided within Islington have somewhat different contexts. I therefore cannot draw direct comparisons with the current appeal development. As such, the appellant's examples have not weighed in favour of the appeal scheme, which instead has been determined on its own merits.

Conditions

13. Given that the development has already been complete at the site, it is only necessary to attach a condition specifying the approved plans/drawings. This is in the interest of clarity and certainty.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above having regard to the development plan, and all other material considerations, the appeal is allowed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR