
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 February 2023

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/22/3313416

106 Evershot Road, Islington, London N4 3BF

- 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 Nick Gregoriou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2022/3354/FUL, dated 15 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first-floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. Reference is variously made in the evidence to 140, 145 and 148 Hanley Road as the adjacent property just to one side of the site. For the avoidance of doubt, No 148 backs onto the site, as does 162 Corbyn Street. I have proceeded on that basis.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development firstly, on the character and appearance of the local area; and secondly, on the living conditions of the occupiers of 160 and 162 Corbyn Street and 148 Hanley Road with particular regard to outlook and sense of enclosure.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a small single storey dwelling that stands on the back edge of the footway along Evershot Road within a predominantly residential area. It is situated between the rears of substantial end of terrace buildings on either side. With its flat roof and largely plain brick façade facing the road, which lines up with the boundary walls that connect with the terraces on each side, No 106 has an unassuming presence in the local street scene. When seen from Evershot Road, the existing use of the building as a dwelling is not immediately obvious.
5. The proposal is to extend No 106 upwards with a new first floor providing additional living space that would be served by 2 lead clad dormers facing the road. The new walls would be brick to match the host building and the

additional floor area would broadly reflect the footprint of the ground floor, apart from the front entrance and lobby.

6. By adding new built form and height to the existing dwelling, No 106 would rise well above the boundary walls on either side and it would gain prominence in the streetscape. A new pitched slate roof with 2 dormers would also introduce overtly domestic features that would be visible from the road. As a result, the completed building would draw the eye because it would more closely resemble a dwelling and yet appear unusually diminutive particularly in the context of taller and larger terraces on either side. That the submitted roof design includes a hipped end on one side, a gable end on the other and a flat element retained over the front lobby would also appear contrived. It would give the upper part of the finished building an odd shape that would further differentiate it from the traditional style of other buildings that characterise the surrounding area. Consequently, the new development would be an obtrusive, discordant element in the street scene and an unwelcome addition to the local area.
7. From what I saw, the area to which the site belongs, whilst having a coherent residential character, is capable of successfully accommodating a variety of dwellings in terms of size and style. Furthermore, I observed that some properties that are visible from the site include sizeable high-level extensions that are prominent from the road. In many cases, these existing extensions have had a significant effect on the intrinsic character of the host building and, in my view, contribute little positively to the overall quality of the local area.
8. However, in this case, the overall visual effect of the appeal scheme is unconvincing because the finished dwelling would appear incompatible in its context. While the existing appeal building is visible from the road, and its roof and fascia project above the boundary walls on each side, it fits comfortably into the streetscape because it appears more akin to an ancillary outbuilding typically found in a residential garden rather than a freestanding dwelling. Therefore, I am unable to share the appellant's opinion that the proposed development would give the existing building greater integrity or that it would repair and improve the Evershot Road frontage.
9. On the first main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the local area. Accordingly, it is contrary to Policy CS 8 of Islington's Core Strategy and Policy DM2.1 of Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies (DMP). These policies aim to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design that is appropriate to its context and positively contributes to local character and the distinctiveness of an area.
10. The appeal scheme also conflicts with a key objective of the Council's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, which is that residential extensions should respect the visual amenity of the street. It is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) insofar as it requires development to be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.

Living conditions

11. Of the neighbouring properties in the vicinity of the site, it is the occupiers of Nos 162 and 148 that are most likely to be affected by the proposal. From evidence before me, each of these adjacent buildings is in use as flats, as is

160 Corbyn Street, which is attached to No 162 and is also referred to in the Council's second reason for refusal.

12. The appeal dwelling would be noticeably taller and larger with the new built form in place and, as a result, the completed building would further enclose the space at the rears of Nos 160 and 162. While the proposal is likely to be evident at close range from most of the rear windows of these adjacent properties, so is the existing appeal building. The proposed enlarged dwelling would be no closer to the back of these adjacent properties and the eaves level would remain relatively low with the new hipped roof angling away from view. As a result, the outlook from the rears of Nos 160 and 162 and the sense of enclosure for their occupiers would not significantly change as a result.
13. The proposed extension would also introduce a new 2-storey gable end facing the rear of No 148 that would be evident from most of its rear-facing windows and garden. However, due to the separation distance between the existing and proposed buildings, the proposal would not overly dominate the outlook from the back of No 148 nor unduly heighten a sense of enclosure for its occupiers.
14. On the second main issue, I conclude that the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 160, 162 and 148 would not be materially reduced by the proposal. Consequently, there is no conflict with DMP Policy DM2.1 insofar as it aims to safeguard residential amenity. My favourable finding in relation to this matter does not outweigh the identified harm in relation to the first main issue.

Other matters

15. The proposal follows a number of schemes to enlarge the appeal dwelling that have been refused planning permission and I appreciate that the site is heavily constrained given the close relationship with existing buildings. Once complete, the enlarged dwelling would exceed the appropriate minimum space standards, unlike the existing property. The additional accommodation would provide an opportunity to remodel the ground floor and it would enhance the living conditions of the appellant. Given the lack of meaningful private outdoor space available within the plot, the extra living space would be particularly valuable. I am sympathetic to these points. However, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
16. Interested parties raise several additional concerns including the effect of the proposal on light, a roadside tree and in relation to the potential for noise and general disturbance. These are important matters and I have considered all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the first main issue, these are not matters that have been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

17. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan, as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.
18. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR