



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 November 2023

by Mark Philpott BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21.12.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U5360/D/23/3329012

64 Navarino road, Hackney, London E8 1AQ

- 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 Timothy Block against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hackney.
 - The application Ref 2023/0544, dated 5 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 7 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is single rear dormer loft conversion and installation of two front roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) was published on 19 December 2023. However, the changes to national policy arising from it are not relevant to the areas of dispute for this appeal. Accordingly, I have not sought comments from the main parties about this matter.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposed development on the significance of locally listed buildings and the character or appearance of the Graham Road and Mapledene Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The site relates to a locally listed, semi-detached dwelling that fronts Navarino Road. It features a front parapet wall with pitched roof slopes behind it to a butterfly roof. It has a slightly stepped façade with sash windows, including one at ground floor with an arched head that matches a transom light over the front door, and a rendered finish with detailing. The proportions, roof form and features of the front of No 64 are similar to and essentially mirrored by the attached dwelling at No 66, which is also locally listed, but has a brick façade and detailing. The significance of each dwelling is derived in large part from their architectural interest. The sense of consistency and symmetry between the pair of dwellings are important contributing factors to their significance.
5. According to the Council, Nos 60 to 74 are also locally listed. These have some commonality with Nos 64 and 66, but differ somewhat in their proportions, roof forms and designs. Nevertheless, these and other properties in the vicinity have a predominantly cohesive character and appearance overall. Moreover,

the CA Appraisal¹ identifies that the CA's overarching feature is its uniformity of proportion, scale and style of built fabric, and I find that this informs its special interest and significance as a whole. No 64 adds to this sense of uniformity and thus contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA.

6. The proposed loft conversion would entail a mansard style extension of the roof. Although it would have a pitched front roof slope, this would be steeper than the existing front facing roof slopes and thus increase the height of the roof closer to the parapet. The gap between the butterfly roof slopes would also be infilled. Consequently, the scheme would be visible when positioned in front of the dwelling, in angled views on approach from Navarino Road, and from the rear. From these perspectives the scheme would unbalance Nos 64 and 66 and therefore appear incongruent. Whilst the parapet and butterfly roof form would remain legible and, in that respect, the proposal would align with the guidance in the SPD², the sense of consistency and symmetry would be undermined. Additionally, though there are mansard features elsewhere in the CA, the development would also contrast poorly with the prevailing lack of readily apparent roof additions to the other locally listed buildings identified.
7. Consequently, the significance of No 64 and the other locally listed buildings would be harmed and the contribution that No 64 makes to the CA would be diminished. The character and appearance of the CA as a whole would thus also be harmed as a result.
8. Paragraph 205 of the Framework advises that when considering the impacts to the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as the CA, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Having regard to the nature of the scheme and the impacts on the significance of the CA, the harm would be less than substantial in the terms of the Framework. In such circumstances, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing a heritage asset's optimum viable use. Additionally, I consider that the locally listed buildings are non-designated heritage assets. Paragraph 209 of the Framework sets out that balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of such assets.
9. It has been put forward that the proposal would make the dwelling more energy efficient and thus reduce its carbon footprint. It is also contended that the dwelling is currently unsuitable for a modern family with occupants that work from home on a regular basis, whereas the proposal would be well-suited to contemporary lifestyle needs. However, these benefits would be modest and, in the case of the latter, principally accrue to the occupiers. Further, No 64 is currently in its optimum viable use as a dwelling. Overall, the sum of the public benefits is insufficient to outweigh the great weight that even less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset carries. Moreover, the benefits do not outweigh the harm identified in other respects.
10. The proposal would be harmful to the significance of the locally listed buildings, and fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Consequently, it conflicts with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the heritage protection policies at Section 16 of the Framework. Furthermore, it conflicts with policies LP1 and

¹ Graham Road and Mapledene Conservation Area: Conservation Area Appraisal, November 1997

² Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document, April 2009

LP3 of the Hackney Local Plan, which set out criteria relating to design quality and local character and echo the Framework's approach to designated heritage assets. In addition, it is contrary to policy HC1 of the London Plan, which states that proposals should conserve the significance of heritage assets. The Council has also referred to London Plan policy D4, but it relates principally to methods of design analysis and scrutiny and maintaining quality, rather than setting out criteria for schemes, and so I find no direct conflict with it.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Mark Philpott

INSPECTOR