
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2024

by Helen O'Connor LLB MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/23/3315341

16 Claybury Hall, Woodford Green, Redbridge IG8 8RW

- 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 Islam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2977/22, dated 6 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 2 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension at 16 Claybury Hall, Woodford Green, Redbridge IG8 8RW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2977/22, dated 6 September 2022, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised on 19 December 2023, and it is a material consideration. Having regard to the matters that are most relevant to this appeal, there have been few notable changes to national policy albeit that the numbering of paragraphs has changed. Hence, I am satisfied that no one would be prejudiced by this change to the national policy context.
3. The appeal relates to development located within the Claybury Conservation Area (CA). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. The appeal site is also within the vicinity of the former stable block at Claybury Hall and Claybury Hall itself, both of which are listed buildings. Section 66(1) of the Act requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the special interest and significance of relevant designated heritage assets.

Reasons

Significance and special interest of heritage assets

5. The CA comprises Claybury Hall, the stable block at Claybury Hall and Claybury Hospital and the surrounding extensive grounds. Its significance is closely associated with the evolution of Claybury Hall as a mansion house, constructed in the late 18th century, and set within a wider estate. The introduction of a sizeable hospital within the grounds towards the end of the 19th century and used as a mental asylum adds a further dimension to the history of the area.
6. Hence, architectural interest is found in the respective 18th and 19th century buildings and their historic fabric. Their contrasting aesthetics tell of how tastes and building methods and materials altered over this period. The configuration of the buildings and their relationship with the topography of the wider landscape provide further evidence of how the estate evolved over time. In addition, it reveals a social story about the structure of society and how attitudes to mental healthcare were developing.
7. Both Claybury Hall (listed entry 1081005) and the ancillary stable block (listed entry 1300546) are Grade II listed buildings. The list entry for Claybury Hall states that it was probably designed by Jesse Gibson for James Hatch. The principal house occupies a prominent position within the CA, overlooking parkland to the south. It is a sizeable, detached, originally two-storey Georgian building with a large extended wing to the east. The significance and special interest of Claybury Hall derives partly from its classically inspired architectural aesthetic and detailing. In particular, the principal bow fronted southern elevation which together with its elevated siting within verdant grounds signal the building's origins as a high-status dwelling. This is clearly discernible notwithstanding that the building has undergone more recent conversion and alteration works to provide residential flats.
8. The ancillary stable block is sited separately from the main hall. The list entry states that it is similar in style and date to the hall. However, the Council's document 'Claybury – A Special Character Appraisal' describes¹ how the stable block fell into disrepair and was largely demolished. The remaining element of the stable block is now used as a car bay. As such, its significance and special interest has been compromised, but retains some historic interest owing to its surviving fabric, position, and association with Claybury Hall.
9. The appeal building is an end of terrace house in a block of three new dwellings constructed in about 2002. The information presented suggests they were permitted as part of a wider residential scheme to convert, extend and refurbish Claybury Hall² to secure its long-term future.
10. The terrace sits close to the remaining stable block but is perpendicular to, and some distance from Claybury Hall, and is clearly deferential to it in terms of size and position. The terrace of three dwellings is arranged such that the central property has a pediment feature which is flanked by broadly symmetrical 'wings' comprising the other dwellings. Sash windows and other traditional styling details are employed that are redolent of, and respectful to, the classical aesthetics of the principal house. Nevertheless, there is no clear evidence before me to suggest that historically this part of the CA accommodated a residential structure or a building similar in size or configuration to the modern addition.

¹ Page 12

² Planning reference 1741/01

11. It follows that its relationship to the listed buildings and the surrounding landscape is a recent one. Whilst inoffensive, there is little basis to find that the terrace, which includes the appeal building, holds any notable historic value or significance that contributes meaningfully towards the heritage interest of the CA, or the respective settings of Claybury Hall and remaining stable block.
12. Therefore, I find that the appeal site makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the CA as a whole, and its significance as a designated heritage asset. Furthermore, although the appeal building lies within the settings of both Claybury Hall and the stable block, it has a neutral impact on the ability to appreciate the significance of either listed building.

The effect of the proposals on significance

13. The proposal seeks to construct a two storey side extension to the end of terrace dwelling. It is proposed to construct the extension in matching brickwork and use similarly proportioned sash windows, stone cills, stonework base, string course, cornice and parapet wall to those already at no.16.
14. Owing to its limited width, lower height and set back from both the front and rear facades of the host dwelling, the proposed extension would appear obviously subordinate to no.16 and the wider terrace. Furthermore, the external materials and detailing would reinforce the architectural styling in evidence, and so it would appear proportionate to, and coherent with the immediate context.
15. In addition, the extension would be discretely located at the northern end of the terrace adjacent to established trees. The presence of this vegetation together with the surrounding topography and position of garaging would largely screen views of the proposed extension from the main access route to Claybury Hall and the appeal property.
16. Taking these factors together, the proposed extension would be an unobtrusive, minor and sympathetic addition, unlikely to draw the eye as one experiences the principal elevation of the terrace. Whilst it would not result in a symmetrical design across the whole terrace, the original principal façade proportions would remain clearly discernible. Hence, I cannot agree that the proposal would harmfully undermine the balanced appearance of the terrace overall.
17. Moreover, the proposal would not disturb surviving historic fabric at Claybury Hall or the former stables. Given the separation distance to Claybury Hall and the modest scale of the development, the proposal would avoid no.16, or the wider terrace featuring more prominently in views to or from the principal house. It follows that the effect of the terrace would remain a neutral one within the CA, as well as within the settings of the listed hall and former stables.
18. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposal would preserve the significance and special interest of Claybury Hall and the former stable block. Hence, there would be no conflict with the expectations of section 66(1) of the Act. Furthermore, the effect of the appeal site on the CA as a whole would be largely unchanged. Consequently, the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved indicating that there would be no conflict with section 72(1) of the Act.

19. As the proposal would preserve the listed buildings and CA, it follows that there would not be harm to the significance of either as designated heritage assets. Thus, there would be no conflict with the historic environment protection policies within the Framework and it is not necessary for the heritage balance set out in paragraph 208 to be undertaken.
20. As I have not found harm to the historic environment would result from the appeal proposal, it becomes unnecessary to consider the fall-back position advanced by the appellant.
21. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would comply with policy HC1 of the London Plan, March 2021 and policies LP26 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030, March 2018. Amongst other matters, these policies require development to be of a good design that respects local character and conserves the significance of heritage assets, including conservation areas and listed buildings.

Other matters

22. The appeal property lies within the Green Belt. Little reference is made to this designation in the Council's Planning Assessment report but there is no suggestion that the appeal scheme would amount to inappropriate development. Paragraph 154 of the Framework identifies that the extension of a building would not be inappropriate development, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Based on the evidence before me, my own observations, and the modest size and discrete positioning of the extension relative to the host dwelling, the proposal would fall within this exception. Hence, I am satisfied that it would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Conditions

23. Conditions specifying a period for commencement and the approved plans are necessary for certainty. In the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area, it is also necessary to ensure that the proposed development is constructed in matching materials to the host dwelling.
24. Given the proximity of the development to existing trees, suitable protection measures will need to be secured to ensure their retention. The submitted tree information³ provides a preliminary arboricultural method statement but recommends⁴ that a detailed arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan should be provided. Hence, I have imposed a pre-commencement condition in this respect to avoid harm to the trees.

Conclusion

25. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Helen O'Connor

Inspector

³ Prepared by Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants Project no. 8797

⁴ Paragraph 6.2

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Location Plan 153/001
 - Proposed Block Plan 153/003
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan 153/015
 - Proposed First Floor Plan 153/016
 - Proposed Roof Plan 153/018
 - Proposed Front Elevation 153/035
 - Proposed Rear Elevation 153/036
 - Proposed Side Elevation 153/037
 - Proposed Section 153/025
- 3) The materials used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those at 16 Claybury Hall as annotated on drawings referenced 153/035, 153/036 and 153/037.
- 4) No site clearance, preparatory work or development shall take place until a scheme for the protection of the retained trees (the tree protection plan) and the appropriate working methods (the arboricultural method statement) in accordance with paragraphs 5.5 and 6.1 of British Standard BS 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations (or in an equivalent British Standard if replaced) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme for the protection of the retained trees shall be carried out as approved.