



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 April 2024

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08.05.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/24/3336210

9 Roseberry Square, Woodford Green IG8 8GT

- 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 Ms Entsar Aljourni against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge Council.
 - The application Ref: 2492/23 dated 24 August 2023 was refused by notice dated 30 October 2023.
 - The application is for conversion of garage into habitable room, replace garage door with a flush window. Alterations to fenestrations at ground floor and associated internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for proposed conversion of garage into habitable room, replace garage door with flush window. Alterations to fenestrations at ground floor and associated internal alterations in accordance with application ref: 2492/23 dated 24 August 2023 subject to the conditions as set out in the schedule below.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the determination of this application a revised National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) was published in December 2023. I have therefore determined this appeal in accordance with the revised provisions within the Framework.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the Claybury Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II Listed former Claybury Hospital.

Reasons

4. The appeal property forms a mid terrace residential unit within a garden square development that is located within the curtilage of the former Claybury Hospital and within the Claybury Conservation Area. The hospital estate once formed part of the Claybury Hospital Asylum and was designed by G.T Hine in the late 19th century to a plan that was highly significant due to its influence over later asylum designs. The hospital's significance thereby is to be found in the aesthetic design and layout of the original hospital buildings, focussed around the tower and chapel features to its centre as well as its echelon design. The

- overall quality of materials and the associated social significance that the former asylum has for the heritage of the wider area is also of importance.
5. Although sitting within the curtilage of the Listed Buildings and within the immediate setting of them Roseberry Square is entirely of the late 20th century/early 21st century. As such it forms one of several such new elements of residential development around the hospital core which seemingly helped enable the repair and conversion of the Listed Buildings into residential use.
 6. Although the actual Listed Buildings that make up much of the former hospital estate are of a typically Victorian quality, their simplicity in form, overall scale and quality of materials have been used to inspire the new developments of Roseberry Square and nearby Brandesbury Square. In this respect the overall form, design and appearance of the Roseberry Square development is generally sensitive to the wider hospital estate.
 7. Roseberry Square itself consists of four rows of terraces facing onto a central rectangular garden space with highway access around the edge. The row of terraces to which the appeal site forms part, is a three storey row with two 'bookend' gable features to either end and a similar gable to the centre. In this respect the block appears symmetrical and provides a focus upon the symmetry of the space to the centre of the development. This symmetry is reflected in the two shorter blocks facing the ends of the rectangular space to the centre. The row of houses directly opposite however consists of link attached houses and as such does not directly echo that of the rest.
 8. The symmetry is also added to by the layout of fenestration and other openings within the row, including garages and front doors. Presumably due to the requirements for parking at the time, garages were included at ground floor level and, with the exception of the centre unit, were typically paired. Although this pairing is not readily perceivable from ground level, due to the presence of vehicles and landscaping, from the oblique aerial images as supplied by the Appellant, such openings would appear to reinforce this symmetry.
 9. The proposal before me intends to convert the existing garage into a habitable room. It would also seek to alter two openings to the rear of the property so as to give better access upon the rear garden area. To the front the proposal is to remove the garage door and to install a window of similar design and proportions to those used on the rest of the house. Alongside this the existing front door would remain as it currently is.
 10. In assessing whether to grant planning permission for this development I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give 'Special Attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Claybury Conservation Area. I am also required by Section 66(1) of the same Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
 11. These requirements are reflected in The Framework, which states that 'Great Weight' should be given to the heritage assets' conservation and also illustrates the positive contribution that heritage assets can make to the creation of sustainable and economically viable communities.

12. The Redbridge Local Plan Policies LP26 and LP33 also reflect the overriding policy guidance in their requirements for proposals to respond well to the character and appearance of an area through good design and in preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area or Listed Building.
13. It is common ground between the parties that the alterations to the rear of the property would not cause harm to the historic environment. However, the installation of a window in place of the garage door is of contention.
14. For the most part I consider that the presence of garage doors actually creates something of a 'deadened' frontage where the ground floor is in-active. As such I consider that although the garages are designed to be as sensitive as possible, they cannot be said to be essential nor desirable to the composition of the terrace itself. Rather they are a practical solution to a perceived need at the time of construction. In this respect therefore, although the layout of garages themselves responds loosely to the symmetry of the terrace as a whole, their presence for the length of the row cannot be considered overly positive.
15. Furthermore, although the contribution of the symmetrical block to the setting of the Listed Hospital buildings and the Conservation Area is notable, the actual contribution that these garage doors provide is negligible. Indeed, within the older hospital buildings, the majority of ground floor elevations are populated by windows. As such I consider that the integration of garage doors was more than likely a practical solution to meet highway requirements of the time and would not lead me to the conclusion that such openings were fundamental in the fenestration design as a whole.
16. In assessing this appeal therefore, although I recognise that the location of this intervention would marginally disrupt the ground floor symmetry of the row of terraces, I am unable to find significant enough harm to the historic environment through the replacement of a negative frontage to one that is undoubtably more positive to justify me dismissing this appeal. As a result, I consider that the benefits of enabling greater ground floor surveillance and use would outweigh the very minor harm caused by the removal of the garage door here.
17. As such the proposal would preserve the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting and significance of the Clayton Hospital Listed Buildings. It would enhance the ground floor streetscene to the benefit of the garden square to which the appeal property belongs. As such the character of the area is conserved and protected and as such the Policy requirements of Policies LP26, LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan (LP) and Policy HC1 of The London Plan, as well as the aspiration for promoting high quality design within the Framework would be met.

Conditions

18. I have added the list of conditions as suggested by the Council in their Questionnaire. These include the standard conditions that are appropriate for controlling the detail and design of such a scheme. I also add to this a condition as suggested by the Appellant to enable details and samples of joinery to be submitted for approval prior to development being undertaken.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, and taking into account of all other matters raised, I allow the appeal subject to the conditions as set out in the schedule below.

A Graham

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later three years from the date of this decision.
2. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
3. Prior to the commencement of the proposed development details of an appropriate scale of all joinery details shall be submitted to an approved by the Local Planning Authority.
4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P101 Proposed Plans, P102 Proposed Elevations (August 2023).

END OF SCHEDULE