



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2024

by Paul Martinson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/24/3336243

Second Floor Flat, 54 Offord Road, London N1 1EB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Andrew Digby-North against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2023/1771/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'mansard roof extension with roof terrace and new fenestration'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site is located in the Barnsbury Conservation Area (the CA). I have therefore had special regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. The new Islington Local Plan (2023) (the LP) has been adopted since the submission of the appeals. I have determined the appeals on the basis of the most up to date policies.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

Reasons

5. The CA covers a large area and contains many high-quality examples of formal late Georgian and early Victorian residential developments in London, including magnificent residential terraces. The relative continuity and consistency of design of the terraces provides a coherent and distinctive character and appearance across the CA.
6. The rooflines of terraces are important components of their character. As set out in the Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002) (the CADG), roof forms here are typically a hidden valley roof behind a parapet. Pertinent to the appeal, the character and appearance and thus the significance of the CA stems from the prevalence of Georgian and Victorian terraces, and their consistency in design, including to the rooflines.
7. The appeal property, a second floor flat, forms part of a terrace of properties located along Offord Road. The terrace (Nos 44-74, even) is a locally listed

building that was constructed in the 1840s. The terrace is over three storeys with a basement with rusticated stucco to the ground floors and distinctive stucco window architraves with console bracketed cornices. These features result in a highly elegant neoclassical terrace with a high degree of consistency across its front elevation. Unlike some other properties along Offord Road, the rooflines to the locally listed terrace are broadly unaltered in views from the street level with no discernible roof extensions. The visible elements of the roof are generally limited to chimney pots in these views. Overall, the consistency of the terrace, including to its roofline, are contributors to the significance of appeal property and the terrace as a locally listed building and reinforce the significance of the CA.

8. The appeal proposal would involve the removal of the existing roof structure and chimney and installation of a mansard style roof extension that would occupy a large proportion of the roof. The structure would have significant height and a massing that would be significantly in excess of that of the existing roof. The structure would project well above the height of the existing parapet wall. It would also extend well above the height of the existing chimney pots which are currently visible from street level.
9. As such, and, given that the existing chimney stacks are set further back from the parapet than the proposed street facing elevation of the extension, I am not convinced by the appellant's assertion that the presence of the appeal proposal would be imperceptible. Based on the evidence before me therefore, the appeal proposal would appear as a significant and incongruous addition to the terrace, extending well above its unaltered roofline in views from street level. Such an addition would disrupt the consistency of the terrace, adversely affecting its significance as a locally listed building. For these reasons the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.
10. The CADG states that traditional roof extensions may be permissible at the properties listed at Schedule 10.2. With the exception of those listed at 10.2, CADG paragraph 10.22 sets out that, '*no roof extension visible from any street level position will be permitted. This includes long views from side streets and across open spaces*'. The appeal property is not listed within Schedule 10.2 and therefore, based on my above reasoning, the appeal proposal would conflict with this guidance. This reinforces my above assessment.
11. I have acknowledged that the properties opposite the appeal site have been extended. However, this terrace does not display the distinctive characteristics of that comprising the appeal property. Moreover, there is no evidence before me that the properties comprising the terrace opposite are locally listed. Given that my assessment relates to the effect on the existing terrace and the effect on the character and appearance of the CA as a whole, the presence of the development opposite does not justify harm to the unaltered roofline to the locally listed terrace. This is supported by the guidance contained within the Council's Urban Design Guide SPD (2017) (the SPD) which, at paragraph 5.151, sets out that: '*What might be acceptable in one part of the street will not necessarily apply to the next terrace even if it is physically connected and on the same side of the same street. The same is true with terraces on the opposite side of the street*'.

12. I accept that there have been some additions to the roof of the terrace containing the appeal property. However, these are not visible as part of the front elevation from street level. They are also significantly smaller than that which is proposed as part of the appeal scheme.
13. The appellant has provided a drawing showing angles of view from street level. However, as is set out in the Council's report, the width of the road is significantly greater than that shown on the drawing. Based on my own observations on site, and my above assessment, this leads me in considerable doubt as to the accuracy of this drawing.
14. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. This would be contrary to the requirements of section 72(1) of the Act. For the same reasons it would cause harm to the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset.
15. With reference to Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), in finding harm to designated heritage assets the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. Given the scale of the proposal, I find that the harm to the CA would be less than substantial. This is nonetheless, of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, Paragraph 208 advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
16. Public benefits would arise from the construction phase of the proposed extension, although these would be limited by the small-scale nature of the development. I acknowledge the reasons that the appellant is seeking additional space and that the proposal would provide more space for working from home, however this is a personal benefit of the proposal rather than a public benefit.
17. Cumulatively, therefore, whilst I acknowledge the public benefits of the scheme referred to above, they would not outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset to which I must give considerable importance and weight.
18. The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. This would be contrary to the requirements of section 72(1) of the Act and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets. There would also be harm to the significance of a locally listed building. The harm to heritage assets would be contrary to Policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) and Policies PLAN1 and DH1 of the LP. Together, these policies seek to ensure new development constitutes high quality design that preserves and enhances heritage assets.
19. Furthermore, the proposal would also conflict with the guidance contained within the CADG and the SPD, as set out above.

Conclusion

20. Having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and any other relevant considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Martinson

INSPECTOR