



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2024

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/D/24/3343106

15 Rydon Street, London N1 7AL

- 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 Mr Alexis Anaman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2024/0145/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as the construction of a second floor above the existing two storey outrigger to the rear of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Arlington Square Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Together with 16 Rydon Street, the appeal property forms one half of a pair of handsome, and largely identical, semi-detached 3-storey houses. The evidence before me indicates that the dwellings were formed following alterations to a single building in the late 1980s. Despite this, the pair make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Arlington Square Conservation Area (CA), an area notable for its mid-19th century townscape comprising repeated architectural features and formal residential squares and terraces.
4. The pair of houses form part of a relatively densely developed triangular plot of land bounded by Rydon Street, St Paul Street and New North Road with the principal buildings facing the latter street with lower development behind. As well as being very similar in appearance at the front, and also similar to the houses opposite, the pair have the same stepping down arrangement at the rear with the rear rooms being accessed at landing level. The step down between the main part of the building and the 2-storey additions to the rear marks the location of the original rear wall and provides a transition between the main part of the houses and the lower buildings in St Paul Street to the rear. The upper parts of the appeal property are visible from St Paul Street and I note clearer views towards the appeal site would be gained from the terrace of houses on the north side of this street.

5. The proposal would comprise the erection of an additional floor above the rear part of the house to provide a third bedroom. This addition would extend noticeably above existing eaves level and would be marginally below the top of the main roof. It would disrupt the otherwise symmetrical massing at the rear of the semi-detached pair, the transition between new and old would be lost and it would introduce additional bulk in an area that is intensively developed and exposed to public and private views from St Paul Street. In summary, due to its siting, height, bulk and massing the proposal would therefore have an unacceptable effect on the host building and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA.
6. Whilst the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA, the harm to this heritage asset would be less than substantial. In these circumstances Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires me to weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance on this matter states that public benefits "*should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit*".
7. The appeal proposal would provide an additional bedroom in a private house. It would not create a new dwelling or bring back into use a dwelling that is uninhabitable or lacking basic facilities such as a kitchen or bathroom. The proposal would therefore make a very limited contribution to the national housing stock and in any event the extra bedroom would be solely for the use of current and future private occupiers of the appeal property. As such the proposal would result in no meaningful benefit to the public at large.
8. For these reasons I conclude that the proposal fails to accord with Policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of the Islington Local Plan Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 which require development within conservation areas to conserve or enhance the significance of the area. There is also conflict with the aims of the Framework, the Islington Urban Design Guide (2017) and the Arlington Square Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002), the latter of which states that to preserve the scale and integrity of the existing buildings it is important that rear extensions are subordinate to the mass and height of the main building.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole

INSPECTOR