

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 August 2024

by C Skelly BA (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/24/3343574

Second Floor Flat, 72 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DN

- 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 Campbell of Bluetime Planning Consultancy Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2023/3625/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of mansard roof extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Between the deadline for final comments and the issuing of this decision, the Secretary of State has issued a Written Ministerial Statement entitled "building the homes we need", and a consultation has begun on the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Some wording changes are proposed to paragraph 124 (e) in relation to mansard roof extensions, however the overall aim would remain unchanged.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the host property and the surrounding area including its effect on the significance of the Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA) at Nos 70 and 74 Caledonian Road and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Keystone Crescent Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The site is a top floor flat located within a row of three-storey, brick-built properties with retail use on the ground floor and residential above. The traditional terrace has a consistent appearance, a key feature of which is its uninterrupted roof line. This roofline has a simple stucco design detailing running along the top of the front parapet walling which lies in front of an unbroken run of butterfly roofs. This part of Caledonian Road is long and wide and its uniform appearance along both sides of the road are a key character of the area.

5. To the rear of the terrace lies a large, housing block called Bonnington House, which disrupts most longer distance views of the rear of the property. Despite this the regular butterfly roof of the wider terrace in which the host property sits can be glimpsed partially through trees, when viewed from Killwick Street and from within the grounds of Bonnington House.
6. The proposal is for a mansard roof extension which would provide an additional bedroom to create a two-bedroom flat. The proposal would be set at an angle and sit behind the existing parapet wall with timber sash windows to match the existing.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

7. The property is between Nos 70 and 74 Caledonian Road, which are NDHAs. The local listing for No 74 relates to its shop front with its significance being the detailed architectural features relating to its role as a shop. Given the proposal would be set back from the main elevation of the roof I do not consider that the proposal would cause harm to the significance of this NDHA.
8. No 70 is also a NDHA and is a prominent building within the street, located on the corner of Caledonian Road and Northdown Street. The significance of this building relates to its detailed architectural design, important street value and its individual character. The Register of Locally Listed Buildings gives the building an A grade and therefore it contributes positively to the area, which was evident during my site visit.
9. No 70 is taller than the appeal property and has a detailed stucco balustrade feature along its roofline. The proposed extension would sit just below the ridgeline of No 70, creating a step-down appearance between it and the wider terrace. This arrangement would erode the visual prominence of this building within the street scene and detract from the balustrade detailing, thereby harming the significance of this NDHA. The proposal would thereby conflict with policy DH1, which seeks amongst other things to conserve or enhance locally listed buildings.

Keystone Crescent Conservation Area

10. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCAA) requires special attention to be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. In addition, the Framework requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets.
11. The CA covers an area of housing developed along the new link road (Caledonian Road) which runs between the New Road and the Holloway area. The boundary runs along the rear gardens of the properties along Caledonian Road crossing Killwick Street at the end of the terrace. Its significance is derived from the remaining coherent appearance of the area which has largely remained unchanged since it was laid out. Given the above, I find that the significance of the CA, in so far as it relates to this appeal is primarily associated with the consistent appearance of the traditional terrace. The host property retains its traditional appearance and therefore makes a positive contribution to the significance of the CA.

12. The Keystone Crescent (CA14) Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002) (CADG) lists locations where new roof extensions visible from street levels or public areas will be allowed. It goes on to state that elsewhere, which includes the appeal site, such proposals will not be permitted because the roofline of a street, particularly on a terrace is a major component of its character.
13. Although the site is located adjacent to the taller building of No 70, this building has deliberately been designed to have a different appearance and marks the corner of the terrace. The remainder of the terrace has an unbroken, consistent roofline and thereby retains its original character. The proposed extension would break up this uniform roof pattern across this long terrace. In addition, the proposal would also break the consistent pattern of butterfly roofs to the rear of the terrace, some of which can be glimpsed from the part of Killick Street within the CA.
14. The appellant has drawn my attention to examples of the other mansards which are located further along Caledonian Road and in nearby streets. However, I noted on my site visit that most of these cases are in a separate terrace to the site, with the exception of the end building which rounds the corner with Killick Street. Like No 70, this building has been designed differently to reflect it being a corner building and does not display the same uniform appearance as the wider terrace. As the other examples are not part of a terrace with unbroken, consistent rooflines they are not directly comparable with the appeal case.
15. I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the CA. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the PLBCAA and Paragraph 203 of the Framework. The proposal would also cause harm to the NDHA and therefore fails to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 209 of the Framework. The proposal thereby conflicts with policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of the Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) and the guidance contained within the Islington Urban Design Guide (2017) and the CADG, which seek amongst other things to ensure new developments are of high quality design, which makes a positive contribution to local character, conserves and enhances heritage assets, and retains historic roof patterns. As a result, the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

Other Matters

18. The appellant has also referred to permitted development rights for the upward extensions of buildings as a fallback position, however as the site is a flat located within a Conservation Area I give this matter limited weight.

Heritage Balance and Conclusion

17. Paragraph 205 of the Framework advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 206 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. Given that the proposal would disrupt the unbroken roofline along the terrace, which is a positive contribution to the significance of the CA, I find the harm to be less than

substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.

18. Paragraph 208 of the Framework says that where harm is identified to the significance of designated heritage assets that it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would provide additional living accommodation to increase the property from a one-bedroom to a two-bedroom flat, however the benefits of this are likely to be limited given that it is only a single bedroom that is being created and does not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
19. The proposed development would conflict with the Development Plan, when taken as a whole, and the Framework. There are no material considerations that indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the Development Plan. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

C Skelly

INSPECTOR