



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on Friday 8 August 2025

by **B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U5360/D/25/3366631

61A Holly Street, Hackney, London, E8 3HS.

- 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 Anne Hardy against the decision of Hackney Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0108.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a roof extension with front dormer window and cantilevered side extension to accommodate a new staircase.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a roof extension with front dormer window and cantilevered side extension to accommodate a new staircase, at 61A Holly Street, Hackney, London, E8 3HS, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2025/0108, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans: 324-PL15-02, 324-PL15-01, 324-PL12-02, 324-PL12-01, 324-PL05-02, 324-PL05-01, 324-PL02-02, 324-PL02-01
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall accord with details which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect the proposed roof and side extensions and front dormer would have on the character and appearance of No 61A Holly Street itself, the terrace of two-storey houses of which forms part, and the wider street scene.

Reasons

3. Holly Street, on its west side, is fronted by a series of three terraces of four brick-built, two-storey, pitched-roofed houses, presenting a uniform appearance in the street scene. In contrast, the opposite, east frontage of the Street consists of much taller, modern apartment buildings of up to five-storeys and much greater scale. The surrounding area exhibits great architectural variety.
4. In this context, the more conventional terraces, including the appeal property, form an area of simple architectural uniformity, evidently valued by the Council as worthy

of conservation. This approach reflects a direct application of prevailing adopted development plan policy and supplementary guidance. This broadly provides that the design, form and scale of a house extension should respect and relate visually to the existing character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings. Supplementary guidance on residential extensions states that front dormers are not normally acceptable unless they match the original design of the building or where there have been a large number of front roof extensions. No front dormers have been allowed elsewhere in the terraces.

5. As summarised by the Council, Policies LP1 of the Hackney Local Plan (HLP) and D4 of the London Plan adopt a rigorous design approach to ensure that all new development is of the highest architectural and urban design quality. They require development to respond in a positive manner to the existing context and local character, be compatible with the existing townscape, including urban grain and plot division, and where possible enhance it. Innovative design is supported where it respects historic character.
6. At the same time, HLP Policy LP12 also supports an innovative approach to housing design, subject to meeting other development plan policies, whilst London Plan Policies D3 and D6 together seek the optimisation of site capacity; this to be achieved by increased development density in sustainable locations, with reference to set minimum bedroom sizes. London Plan H2 recognises that local character needs to evolve over time in appropriate locations with a good availability of public transport and town centre facilities.
7. The Hackney Characterisation Study (HCS) and the City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework identify the area surrounding the appeal site as being of low-rise, low-density, 1960s-onwards development. It is therefore considered that this area within the Dalston Strategic Development Location has potential for intensification of development in locations without heritage constraints. The HCS regards this townscape typology as amongst the lowest-valued and difficult to change.
8. I agree with the Appellant that this overarching policy and guidance leads to an understanding of the local townscape and its potential for change at variance with the approach of the Council in connection with the proposal subject to this appeal.
9. The terraces on the west side of Holly Street are neither listed nor within a conservation area, nor subject to any other heritage constraints. Their location is highly sustainable. The development would create a modern, energy-efficient family dwelling with one double and three single bedrooms, whereas presently it has only three single bedrooms, according to current space standards. This would result in an increased development density, making more efficient use of the site, in a recognised low-density area, where change and intensification is in principle supported in adopted planning policy and guidance. I accord these factors together significant planning weight in favour of the proposed development.
10. I therefore consider there to be scope for an innovative approach in this case, if it can be judged, on this fresh assessment, to be compatible with the underlying objectives of the development plan, taken as whole. Of course, as the Appellant admits, that does not exempt the proposal from design scrutiny.

11. Other dwellings neighbouring No 61A and further along the terraces have rear roof extensions but, significantly, none exceed the height or width of the main roofs, and none are seen from the street.
12. In contrast, the proposed roof extension, with its extensively glazed, full-width, front-facing dormer and sweeping curved roof profile would be highly visible and would radically alter the character and appearance of the property frontage and the wider streetscape.
13. The side extension would add to this effect. However, the terraces are not set to a continuous building line but are stepped at varying distances from the front boundaries with substantial gaps between the interfacing end gables. This juxtaposition would diminish somewhat the visual impact of the side extension.
14. The enlarged dwelling, with its raised main roof, would be seen not only against the simple and conventional profiles of its immediate neighbours but within the broader context of the generally taller and more recent buildings on the east side of Holly Street and other surrounding roads. Even so, the front roof profile of the house would retain its eaves line and forward roof slope, consistent with the present street character.
15. Overall, I consider the proposed extension to be inherently designed with commendable flare and imagination. In its radical approach, the proposed development would make a strong and exciting individual design statement but with due respect for the host dwelling and the surrounding area. This weighs substantially in favour of the appeal.
16. The appeal proposal fulfils many aspects of the development plan, as discussed above. On balance, where it departs from a strict interpretation of design policy and guidance, I judge this to be substantially outweighed by the factors I have identified in its favour.
17. For the foregoing reasons, I consider the proposed development to be compliant with the development plan as a whole, taking into account London Plan Policies D1, D3, D4, D6 and H2 as well as HLP Policies LP1 and LP12 on the form, character, and design quality of development.
18. Finally, on the evidence before me, including the several High Court judgments cited by the Appellant, it is possible that the appeal dwelling could be raised by a storey under permitted development rights, creating a material planning fallback position. That does not form part of my assessment of the planning balance, but it leans to some extent in favour of the appeal.
19. I conclude that this appeal should be allowed and the permission sought granted subject standard conditions, save that, as suggested by the Appellant, advance approval of the type and quality of the finishing materials to be used in the new construction should be obtained from the Council.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR