



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2026

by **O S Woodward MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 April 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/25/3374025

119 Holloway Road, LONDON N7 8LT

- 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 Huseyin Guzel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2024/3569/FUL.
 - The development proposed is alterations to the ground floor to create additional storage for the ground floor unit, alterations to the existing rear extension roof, erection of first floor extension to the rear of the property to create office space for the existing ground floor restaurant and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Because the appeal relates to a proposal which would affect the setting of a Grade II* listed building and is in the St Mary Magdalene Conservation Area (the CA), I have had special regard to Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. A revised National Planning Policy Framework Consultation was released on 16 December 2025. Consultation on the document closed in March 2026 but the response from the Government is not yet known. It is therefore likely to be subject to change before it is adopted and it carries very limited weight at this time. I have not, therefore, sought any responses from the main parties in this regard.
4. There are inconsistencies between the submitted existing drawings and what I could see on site. In the drawings, the closet wing has a sloped roof but as I viewed it on site it now has a flat roof and a slightly larger silhouette. I have based my decision on the submitted drawings. In addition, it is unclear from the existing drawings that there is also a ground floor extension covering the majority of the former rear garden. Because of this ambiguity I have based my assessment on what I viewed on site with regard to this part of the building.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including whether or not it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA;

- whether or not the proposal preserves the Grade II* listed building ‘Church of St Mary Magdalene and Attached Railings’¹ or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, in terms of how the building is experienced in its setting; and,
- whether or not the proposed development would provide satisfactory living or working conditions for existing and future occupiers, with particular regard to overlooking and the overall standard of accommodation.

Reasons

Character and appearance, including the CA and listed building

Existing

6. The appeal property is part of a terrace with retail and commercial units to the ground floors and two storeys of accommodation above. The front elevation of the terrace is largely unaltered, save for fascia designs and changes, and is of pleasant appearance and character. By contrast, to the rear there are a variety of extensions of varying design, age, and size. The majority of the rear gardens have been infilled and there are a mixture of full width and closet wing, one, and two storey extensions above the ground floor level. Some of the properties have a two-storey extension in the rearmost part of the former garden areas. In addition, there are prominent extract ducts and other paraphernalia associated with the commercial uses to the ground floor.
7. The appeal property as existing has a vacant commercial unit to the ground floor and residential use to the upper two floors. The existing design of the building is a closet wing extension to first floor level, and with a full width ground floor extension or roof to an enclosed terrace area. In common with the rest of the terrace, it presents a harmonious and mostly unaltered front elevation. Its rear elevation is less attractive, with some unsympathetic alterations, in particular the ground floor extension or covered seating area. However, it is much less altered than some of the other properties along the terrace, with the ground floor extension largely screened by the rear wall, and the 1st floor extension being a closet wing, thus reducing its prominence and bulk. The property therefore still retains the primacy of the main part of the building fronting Holloway Road and is of acceptable character and appearance as viewed from the rear.
8. The appeal property and terrace lie on the west side of Holloway Road, in the CA. The CA comprises two main character areas, Holloway Road itself and the surrounding residential streets. Holloway Road is a very busy, commercial thoroughfare. It is lined by a mixture of building styles and ages, and its character and appearance is largely defined by its busyness and urban, commercial nature. The terrace within which the appeal property sits positively contributes to the significance of this part of the CA because it presents an attractive front elevation to the road and maintains the commercial units to the ground floor.
9. The residential side streets are of a typical north London vernacular, largely Victorian although interspersed with more modern intrusions. The appeal property does not relate to these streets because it fronts onto Holloway Road, and it is a neutral contributor to the significance of those parts of the CA. However, the CA also includes a Grade II* listed church and its grounds, which lie directly to the rear

¹ List entry number 1195637

of the appeal site. The appeal property has a neutral effect on the significance of this part of the CA because its rear extensions are modest above ground floor level and suitably subservient at 1st floor, as set out above.

10. The Grade II* listed church sits within extensive grounds, considering its urban location. The grounds are largely laid out as a garden although there are some elements of a cemetery. It is fully accessible from surrounding streets and is also park like in nature. The grounds have a clear functional and visual relationship to the church and provide breathing space in an otherwise very urban environment. They positively contribute to the significance of the church.
11. The rear elevation to the terrace within which the appeal property sits is close to the church, only separated from the main front elevation and entrance to the church by a footpath. This proximity combined with the three-storey height of the terrace creates an uncomfortable relationship to the church. The existing extensions to many of the properties, particularly the two storey extensions at the rearmost part of the rear gardens which are very close to the church, are particularly harmful to this relationship. The rear of the terrace therefore detracts from the significance of the church. The appeal property does not, however, have such an extension, and has a much lesser effect on the setting of the church than those properties in the terrace that either back directly onto the church and/or have larger rear extensions.

Assessment

12. It is proposed to erect a full width ground floor extension, albeit with a small cut-out terrace area by the closet wing. It is then proposed to erect a 2nd-storey extension to the rearmost part of the rear garden area. Both levels of the rear extension would have windows facing out onto the footpath to the rear. There would also be an access door. This extension would be for ancillary floorspace to the existing commercial unit to ground floor, albeit with independent access from the rear.
13. The proposed extension would be bulky and this bulk would be exacerbated by the position at the rearmost element of the rear garden. It would also be proportionately too large in comparison to the bulk and mass of the main, existing part of the property. Although the rear elevation of the terrace is already compromised and includes similar rear extensions, the appeal property is one of those properties which has not yet been undermined to any great extent. In addition, the proposed door and window to the rear elevation would be incongruous on what is an otherwise blank elevation of rear garden walls at ground floor level along the rear of the terrace and its gardens. The harm that would be caused would therefore further erode the character and appearance of the area, including the CA.
14. The proposal would also detract from the setting of the listed building, in a location which is close to the building and where the church and the appeal property and the wider terrace are clearly visible in public views from within the church grounds, including the relationship to one another either side of the narrow path.

Overall

15. The proposed development would therefore harm the character and appearance of the area, including to the CA. I have also found harm to the special interest and heritage significance of the listed building in terms of how the building is

experienced in its setting. I assess the level of harm to the heritage assets to be less than substantial, towards the lower end of the scale. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, and Policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of the Islington Local Plan Strategic and Development Management Policies September 2023 (the SDMP). Collectively, these policies seek high quality design which reflects the character and appearance of the area, and to protect the significance of heritage assets.

Living conditions

16. The submitted drawings indicate that it is proposed to internally re-model the existing residential floorspace in the upper floors of the front part of the building, to create two flats. However, this element of the proposal is not included within the description of development. Even on the drawings, it is unclear how the layout changes would function and what the layout of the flats would be. Nevertheless, it is clear that all the floorspace would be for residential use. In addition, the proposed extension is supposed to be ancillary floorspace for the existing commercial unit, however it would have independent access from the rear and has been labelled as 'office' on the proposed drawings. This ambiguity could be removed by applying a condition that the floorspace remain as ancillary office and storage use to the existing commercial unit, as has been offered by the appellant.
17. I have based my assessment on the above basis. In this regard, it is unclear if the room within the existing closet wing at first floor level would be used for living accommodation. The existing floorplan indicates a bathroom, and this notation has been removed from the proposed floorplan. The window to this room is very close to the window to the ancillary commercial space within the proposed extension to the rear garden. I acknowledge that the appeal site is in an urban location but the windows would be very close, more so than is typical even for such locations. The existing outlook is partially obstructed by neighbouring extensions but none are as close as the proposed rear extension, which would significantly worsen the outlook from the window.
18. The combination of the lack of privacy and worsening of outlook would create unacceptable levels of privacy for the occupants of the flat. The lack of privacy from overlooking would also create an unacceptable working environment for the users of the ancillary floorspace. Because the room in the closet wing could be used for living accommodation, it is not possible to use a condition to insist on obscure glazing because this could create unacceptable living conditions within the affected room.
19. Overall, therefore, the proposal would not provide satisfactory living or working conditions for existing or future occupiers with regard to overlooking and outlook, and it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the overall standard of accommodation would be acceptable. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policy PLAN1 of the SDMP, which seeks to protect the living conditions of existing occupiers and to create acceptable living conditions for future occupiers.

Planning Balance

20. I have found conflict with five policies across two Development Plan documents. The proposal would be unacceptable both in terms of design and quality of accommodation. It therefore fails to comply with the Development Plan when considered as a whole.

21. The Framework is an important material consideration. Paragraph 215 is relevant to the proposal. In this regard, the public benefits of the proposal would include the additional floorspace and therefore utility provided for the ground floor commercial unit. However, this would be largely private in nature. In addition, the quality of the proposed floorspace would be low because of the unacceptable working conditions that would be created. Making efficient use of an urban site and the re-use of materials where possible are also benefits, but of limited weight due to the small scale of the proposal. Although the harm to both the CA and the listed building would be at the lower end of less than substantial, this would not be outweighed by these limited benefits. There are not, therefore, any material considerations which indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

O S Woodward
INSPECTOR