



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2024

by Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15TH July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/24/3341315

13 Grafton Crescent, Camden, London NW1 8SL

- 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 Mrs Alexis Zegerman against the decision of The London Borough of Camden Council.
 - The application Ref is 2023/5141/P.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a three storey terraced house with small palisaded front garden. It forms part of a terrace of similar brick built properties with stucco ground floors and architectural detailing. The terraces have a continuous parapet line with either lower butterfly or flat roofs behind. This terrace, along with the similar terrace on the other side of the street create a coherent and unified streetscape, where their architectural cohesion and roof scape, defined by the continuous parapets without roof extensions, are of particular note.
4. The appeal dwelling forms part of a group of terraced houses on both sides of the street that have been recognised for their local significance as heritage assets and have been added to the Council's list of locally listed buildings. The appellant has drawn to my attention that the street address numbering used by the Council in this list does not include the numbers of all properties in the terrace. The local list description of the two terraces does however appear to indicate that all houses in the terraces on Grafton Crescent are intended to be included in the list of locally listed buildings.
5. However, notwithstanding this apparent disparity, the appeal dwelling is identified by its street address number as forming part of the group of houses in the terrace that are identified in the Council's list of locally listed buildings. As such, the appeal dwelling is a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA), along with the other houses in the terrace that are identified on the Council's list.

6. In my judgement, the distinctive architectural qualities of the building contribute much to its significance as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA), together with others in the terrace so identified, and I find that, along with the other houses in the terrace, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the local area.
7. The proposal would add a mansard roof extension that would replace the appeal dwelling's existing butterfly roof form. The proposed mansard extension would be taller than the existing front parapet but would be set well back from it, towards the rear of the roof.
8. The degree of setback of the proposed mansard extension would result in it not appearing in direct frontal views of the appeal dwelling at street level. I appreciate that the appellant has sought to minimise the visibility of the proposal and overcome the reasons given for other earlier refusals for other proposals for roof extensions. However, in longer and more tangential views of the appeal dwelling the proposed mansard would be visible and would interrupt the roofline of the appeal dwelling and terrace of which it forms part. The same effect would be visible from the upper floors of houses opposite as well as views from the wider surrounding area.
9. The addition of the mass of the proposed mansard, its position in the local roofscape and its visibility would result in it being unduly apparent and would interrupt the existing continuous parapet roof line. As such, the proposal would appear as an incongruous addition to the appeal dwelling and would, therefore, fail to reflect its existing character and appearance and that of the group of terraced houses of which it forms part and maintain their significance as NDHAs, thereby detracting from the character and appearance of the local area.
10. Both the appellant and the council have drawn to my attention to mansard extensions in the wider area away from the terrace. These do not lead me to conclude that the Council has been inconsistent in its approach. The existence of other mansard roof extensions nearby do not add weight in favour of this proposal as it is not the roof form itself, which is of concern but how, in this particular case, it would impact on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the local area. As such, these other mansard extension would have been considered on their own individual merits and I have done likewise in my consideration of the proposal, which is a main tenet of the planning system. I have, therefore, afforded these only limited weight in my considerations.
11. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect NDHA's, the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (the Framework) advises that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In this case, the scale of the harm resulting from the proposed roof extension would be less than substantial, but in accordance with paragraph 209 the Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits to the proposal.
12. The proposal would lead to an additional bedroom to the appeal dwelling, thereby making it more suitable for a larger family. The use of PV panels as part of the proposal would result in the production of a small amount of renewable energy that would form a small part of the household energy use. The addition of the proposed mansard extension is not the only method by

which similar renewable energy benefits of PV panels could be achieved. I find, therefore, that the benefits of the proposal are more substantially private and are limited in terms of their public benefit.

13. I find, for the reasons given, that the proposed mansard extension would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the surrounding area. Taking a balanced judgement, I find that and limited public benefits of the proposal are insufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the NDHA that I have identified.
14. The proposed mansard extension would, therefore, conflict with Policies D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan (2017), Policy D3 of the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (2016), Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) and Sections 12 and 16 of the Framework. Collectively these seek to ensure that development is of high architectural and urban design quality, respects local context and preserves or enhances heritage assets, including NDHA's.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR