



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2007

by **Paul K Jackson** B Arch (Hons) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

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Decision date:
5th November 2007

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/A/07/2050444

72-74 Parkway, Regents Park, London NW1 7AH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Dow Properties Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
- The application Ref 2007/0352/P, dated 21 January 2007, was refused by notice dated 3 May 2007.
- The development proposed is conversion of one residential unit above shop into 6 No. residential units composed of 3 No. 2-bed units and 3 No. 1-bed units with new extensions to rear and addition of 3rd floor mansard.

Decision

1. For the reasons given below, the appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. Parkway is lined with a variety of small shops and commercial premises, with mostly residential accommodation above. The buildings are almost all of narrow frontage with 3 storeys and are of relatively simple design originating in the 1820s. There is a prominent high horizontal parapet of varying height which is common to both sides of the road. In my opinion this feature, which remains remarkably unaltered, contributes much to the character of the road.
3. The proposed development includes a flat roof over a new third floor; with a mansard and dormers facing the street, above and behind the parapet. In my opinion, the mansard and dormers would be easily visible. Whilst not set forward as much as a mansard at the adjacent property Nos. 66-70, it would be almost as high as the much earlier 3rd floor roof extension at No. 76 and would be prominent seen from the street. The eastern flank wall would rise well above Nos. 66-70. In my view, it would coalesce with the neighbouring buildings to form a row of 3 with mansard roofs close to the frontage, which together would appear out of character. I give little weight to the likelihood that trees in front of the buildings would conceal the extension; these would be without leaf for much of the year.
4. This is a serious objection, but in addition, the proposed extension to the rear would almost double the depth of the building and would rise to 3 storeys above the ground floor. This would be in a basic cubic form with no relief apart from a slightly inclined slated mansard to the rear of the top floor. By reason of its shape and bulk, this element would appear in a different league to any other existing extension at the rear of neighbouring buildings, albeit that these are very varied in appearance. It would not be subservient but would completely obliterate the original form of the building that I consider is sympathetic to the early 19th century character of the area that is of value. Whilst many of the 'butterfly' roof forms

have been replaced by later development, that does not justify a rear extension of the form and scale proposed here. It would be domineering and overwhelming in its context, especially seen from numerous residential properties in Gloucester Crescent at the rear. The effect would be emphasised by the bland and repetitive fenestration that would relate poorly to adjacent buildings.

5. The Council does not object to a mansard extension in principle and I do not disagree. However, a third floor extension must preserve or enhance, or leave unharmed, the character or appearance of the conservation area. This proposal would add significant and prominently visible bulk above the existing parapets that are an important feature of the street scene. It would substantially alter and detract from the character of the properties at the rear. As such, it would seriously conflict with the aims of policies B1, B3, B7 and B9 of the Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006 (UDP).
6. In addition, whilst I accept that the impact of the rear extension may just be acceptable in terms of natural light received by adjoining occupiers, the impact on their outlook would be severe. In particular, I consider that looking out through the windows of the rear habitable rooms of No. 76, a substantial proportion of the existing pleasant angle of view would be replaced by solid brickwork, to the extent that the occupants' living conditions would be unacceptably compromised. In this respect, it would be contrary to the aims of UDP policy SD6.
7. Having regard to the provision of cycle storage in the dwellings, I consider there would be sufficient space within the development for this purpose and the matter could be covered by a suitable condition: the objectives of policy T3 would then be satisfied. I consider that the environmental credentials of the development are subject to the Building Regulations and in any case could be achieved by imposing conditions: satisfying policy SD9 of the UDP.
8. The development replaces a family dwelling unit and in respect of 2 of the 2 bedroom flats, I am satisfied that there is a need for a contribution to education facilities: there cannot be an assumption that the units would be occupied only by young professionals. The increase in the number of residents will increase the demand for open space which I am satisfied requires enhancement. The site is within an area where public transport links are exceptionally good and having regard to local and national policies that discourage use of the car, I agree that future residents should be prevented from obtaining a parking permit. In respect of these matters, no section 106 Undertaking or agreement has been provided by the appellants. However, I consider provision of these benefits could be covered by a negatively worded condition. With that proviso, the development would not conflict with the aims of policies SD2, N4 and T8 of the UDP.
9. I have taken into account all the other matters raised, including the advantages of providing 6 small flats in an area where they are needed; and the appellants' need to finance the overall development. I have also had regard to other schemes referred to by the appellants as precedents, but there are distinct differences between these and the appeal development. However, none of these matters overrides my concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area or the effect on living conditions.

Paul Jackson

INSPECTOR