
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 December 2014

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9 December 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/14/2226564

28 Ornan Road, London, NW3 4QB

- 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 Mr and Mrs Emma Hill against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2014/3019/P, dated 28 April 2014, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2014.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is the middle of three units in a two storey, flat roofed terrace dating from the 1970's. The terrace is, therefore readily distinguishable from the generally larger Edwardian buildings and early twentieth century mansion blocks found in this part of the Conservation Area. Nevertheless, the terrace sits comfortably within the street scene and the unified flat roof form is characteristic of the other late-twentieth century residential buildings in Ornan Road. Therefore, the terrace makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
4. The proposal would add an additional storey across the full width of the appeal property. I recognise that the extension would be set in from the front and back of the walls of the building and that the detailing and materials would match the host property. However, by virtue of its size and position, the extension would be prominent in the Ornan Road street scene. Whilst the planting in the garden of 14 Perceval Avenue helps to screen the terrace on the approach from Haverstock Hill, the extension would be seen in mid and short range views from Ornan Road. The rear of the extension would also be glimpsed in views from Belsize Lane.
5. The extension would disrupt the uniformity of the roofline which does much to integrate the terrace with its surroundings. The abrupt change in the height of part of the building would not be characteristic of the more modern buildings in

- the area. As a result, the building would be more assertive in the street scene and the contribution which it makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would change from neutral to negative.
6. Whilst the Conservation Area Statement considers the appeal terrace to be less interesting than two other nearby contemporary buildings, I am not persuaded that this amounts to support for the appeal proposal. Indeed, the Statement commends the other buildings for the simplicity of their design. Adding a prominent extension to part of the appeal terrace would, if anything, reduce the simplicity of its design.
 7. The appellant argues that extending the central unit would maintain the symmetry of the terrace. However, in this case, the more significant characteristic is the uniformity of the roofline, rather than the symmetry of the terrace as a whole.
 8. I recognise that the extension has been designed in a way which would allow the other dwellings in the terrace to be similarly extended and that planning permission has previously been granted (application reference PWX0302267 and subsequent revised proposals) for an additional storey on each of the dwellings. However, there is nothing to suggest that the appellant has control over whether the adjoining dwellings are extended. Therefore, if allowed, the appeal proposal could remain the only roof extension to the terrace indefinitely. The implementation of a single scheme for the whole building would not give rise to my concerns regarding the loss of uniformity resulting from the appeal proposal.
 9. Consequently, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the Conservation Area. It would, therefore, conflict with policy CS14 of the Council's Core Strategy and policies DP24 and DP25 of its Development Policies. Together, these policies require extensions to buildings to achieve a high standard of design, preserve heritage assets, including having regard to Conservation Area Statements, and to consider the character and form of the host and neighbouring buildings.
 10. Nor would the proposal meet the aim of paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets to be taken into account. In terms of the assessment required by paragraph 134 of the Framework, whilst the impact of the proposal on the Conservation Area would be less than substantial, I have not been made aware of any public benefits sufficient to outweigh it.
 11. There is nothing to indicate that the development plan policies referred to above are in conflict with the Framework. I have had regard to the other concerns expressed locally, but none has led me to a different overall conclusion.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons outlined above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR