
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2015

by **N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 22 July 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/15/3004660
166 Arlington Road, Camden, London, NW1 7HP

- 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 Ms Sandra Nicholls against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2014/7574/P, dated 8 December 2014, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2015.
 - The development proposed is described as “to convert her flat with the aim to create a more spacious flat and a higher quality living space. The flat in its current state has three bedrooms, toilet and bathroom on first floor level and the second floor level is split into an open plan living, dining, kitchen with access to loft space. The design proposal rearranges the bedroom layout on first floor in order to add an ensuite bathroom to the master bedroom and a family bathroom. On second floor it is proposed to extend the kitchen into the terrace in order to have a richer relationship between this space and a bigger kitchen. A toilet is also proposed in the stair landing at this level.”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a brick built, double-fronted, tall terraced building with a basement. The property has been divided into three flats. It has attractive period features, including sash windows and is located in a prominent position, close to the corner of Arlington Road and Parkway.
 4. The appeal property is located in the Camden Town Conservation Area, which is characterised by many attractive period properties in a broad mix of uses. Whilst I observed during my site visit that many properties in the Conservation Area have been extended and/or altered, such changes largely appear subservient to host properties and sympathetic to the Conservation Area.
 5. I noted during my site visit that the attractive and prominent façade and largely unaltered roofline of the appeal property contribute significantly to the attractive character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Indeed, whilst
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numerous more modern buildings and examples of roof extensions are visible nearby, I find that it is the features of largely unaltered period properties, including the appeal property, that make the strongest positive contribution to the Conservation Area's attractive qualities.

6. The proposed roof extension would, I find, introduce bulk, height and massing that would appear as an alien feature, out of proportion with the traditional form of the host building. The harmful impact of this would be exacerbated as a result of the choice of materials, whereby the extensive glazing would fail to appear in harmony with the appeal property's attractive brickwork and sash windows.
7. Further to the above, I consider that the proposed raised parapet would appear as an uncharacteristic addition, to the detriment of the appeal property's proportions and to the disruption of its harmonious relationship with No 164 Arlington Road, adjacent.
8. In addition, whilst the proposed roof extension would be set back from the front of the building, it would, due to its height and form, still appear prominently in a wide range of views, most notably from the busy corner of Arlington Road and Parkway. Resultantly, I find that its incongruous appearance would lead the proposal to draw attention to itself and would detract from the attractive qualities of the Conservation Area.
9. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the Framework, Core Strategy¹ policy CS14, and LDF² policies DP24 and DP25, which together amongst other things, protect local character.
10. Rather than make the positive contribution desired by paragraph 131 of the Framework, the proposal harms local character. The harm caused would be significant in terms of the immediate context of the proposal, but is less than substantial in the context of the Conservation Area as a whole.
11. In the above circumstances, paragraph 134 of the Framework requires the harm to be weighed against any public benefit. Whilst I note that the proposal would provide additional living space, this does not equate to a public benefit that would outweigh the identified harm to the Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.

Other Matters

12. In support of her case, the appellant refers to other roof top development elsewhere. I recognise above that whilst there are examples of roof extensions in the vicinity of the appeal site, the existing, largely unaltered form of the appeal property's roofline contributes to local character.
13. The proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance local character. Whilst other developments appear prominently in the Conservation Area, including a particularly noticeable one close to the rear of the appeal property, this does not alter or significantly lessen the harm identified above.

¹ London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010).

² London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies (2010).

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR