

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 February 2016

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19 February 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/15/3138142

Flat A, 32 Lowfield Road, Camden, London NW6 2PR

- 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 Helen Sinclair against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2015/3567/P, dated 13 August 2015, was refused by notice dated 10 November 2015.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a single storey rear extension at Flat A, 32 Lowfield Road, Camden, London NW6 2PR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2015/3567/P, dated 13 August 2015, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 32LR01; 32LR02; 32LR03; 32LR04; 32LR05 and 32LR06.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Camden Core Strategy policies CS14 and DP24 seek to promote the highest standard of design in all development and which respects local character and context. Developments will be expected to consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, as well as of the existing building. The Council have published planning guidance to support the policies in the Core Strategy, of which Camden Planning Guidance 1: Design (CPG1) which includes guidance in respect of extensions.
 4. The appeal property is a mid-terrace basement flat located within a terrace of substantial three storey-plus-basement dwellings. The rears of properties along this side of Lowfield Road typically feature pairs of two and three storey
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outriggers, with some featuring further single storey extensions. The appeal site is no different in respect of its rear outrigger which provides additional accommodation for the basement, ground and first floors of this particular building.

5. The proposal before me seeks to construct a single storey extension that would project in the region of 3 metres from the existing outrigger and, in total, in the region of 6.6 metres from the rear wall of the main building. There are a wide variety of rear extensions along Lowfield Road although perhaps, from my observations and also from the submissions of both parties, none that project quite as far from the main building as the current proposal.
6. However, I do not share the Council's view of the proposed extension. Due to difference in ground levels from front to rear the rear elevation of the terrace is of a significant and substantial scale; effectively four storeys at the rear. There are also a number of rear extensions of up to two and three storeys in height along the rear of the terrace. In this context the proposed single storey extension would, I find, be neither excessively large nor out of character with the adjoining properties.
7. In terms of height, the proposal would clearly be subordinate to that of the substantial rear elevation of the terrace as a whole. Although it would extend across the width of the garden plot, the limited height and flat roofed nature of the proposed extension would not draw attention, whilst it would relate well in terms of scale and projection to the existing two and three storey outrigger shared between Nos 30 and 32 Lowfield Road. Whilst I acknowledge that the extension would provide a significant increase in the overall amount of accommodation provided within flat A, I nonetheless find that its overall scale and massing would remain very much secondary to that of the main building.
8. For these reasons I conclude that the proposed extension would not harm the character or appearance of either the host building, or that of the surrounding area. The extension would use matching bricks to complement the materials of the main house and, overall, I find that the proposed extension would accord with the overall design aims of policies CS14 and DP24 of the Camden Core Strategy.

Conditions

9. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council. I agree that the time limit and condition specifying the relevant plans are necessary in the interests of proper planning and to provide certainty, respectively. With regard to materials, I consider such a condition to be necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the existing building and of the surrounding area and have imposed a condition to that effect.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, and having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR