
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2016

by CD Cresswell BSc (Hons) MA MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/16/3154201

23 Healey Street, Camden, London NW1 8SR

- 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 Oliver McHugh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2016/1596/P, dated 22 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is creation of new 3rd floor storey, with pitched roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is situated within a terrace of older style properties. Individual properties in the terrace are traditionally proportioned and of similar design, thereby providing a clear architectural rhythm along much of the street frontage. Because the terrace on the opposite side of the road is of a similar architectural style, Healey Street maintains a high degree of visual consistency.
 4. One consistent feature within the terrace is the pattern of valley roofs which have distinct peaks and troughs. However, due to the height of the terrace and the restricted viewing angles, these features are not easily seen at ground level within Healey Street. Although the proposed extension would increase the height of the roofline, it would be set back from the frontage of Healey Street behind the existing parapet wall. As such, it would not be easily noticeable within the public domain when seen from this perspective.
 5. The pattern of valley roofs is more evident within Grafton Crescent where the rear elevation of the appeal terrace is visually exposed. Whilst there are existing roof extensions at No 15 and 25 Healey Street, I consider these are small and not visually prominent. Consequently, the roofline of the terrace maintains a consistent appearance when viewed from Grafton Crescent.
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6. The extension would infill a gap between the peaks and troughs of the valley roofs. As such, it would disrupt the relatively unbroken pattern which is evident at the rear of the terrace. The appellant argues that the extension would not be seen within Grafton Crescent as it would slope gradually upwards behind the parapet wall, thereby restricting viewing angles within the street. I have noted the sectional drawings in this regard. However, while the extension may not be highly prominent at ground level from immediately outside the site, it would nonetheless be seen in side views from within Grafton Crescent where its bulk and size would be more noticeable. Consequently, the disruption to the consistent pattern of valley roofs would be evident within the Grafton Crescent street scene.
7. The distinctive characteristics of the area are also derived from views within the private domain. In this regard, the extension would be clearly visible from the upper floors of properties in both Healey Street and Grafton Crescent. From here, the effect of the proposed development on the consistent pattern of the terrace would be especially noticeable.
8. I am aware that an extension to No 14 Healey Street was allowed at appeal. This is situated on the opposite side of the road as the appeal property in a different terrace. In that particular terrace, the Inspector determined that there was not an unbroken run of valley roofs. However, in the current appeal, I have found that the terrace in question contains a sequence of valley roofs which would be harmed by the proposed development.
9. I accept that the detailed design of the proposed extension seeks to respect the character of the terrace. However, for the reasons stated above, it would not represent an appropriate form of development in this location. The appellant's need to provide a larger family home is recognised and I have taken this into account in reaching my decision. However, government policy set out within the *National Planning Policy Framework* places strong emphasis on maintaining local distinctiveness and the promotion of high quality design is a 'core principle' of that document. As such, the extension of the house to accommodate family needs is not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified in this particular case.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. There would be conflict with Policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025. There would also be conflict with Policy DP24 of the Camden Development Policies 2010-2025. These require designs that respect local context and character.
11. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

CD Cresswell

INSPECTOR