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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 May 2018

**by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 5 June 2018**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/17/3190528**  
**42a and 44 Coity Road, London NW5 4RY**

- 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 A Abbey and Mr and Mrs Gregoriou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
  - The application Ref 2017/2097/P, dated 25 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2017.
  - The development proposed is erection of 2 storey rear extensions to the rear of nos. 42a and 44 Coity Road, erection of single storey rear conservatory to no. 44 Coity Road, and lowering of floor level of no. 42a front vault by 550mm.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matters

2. The site address, appellants' details and description of the development provided on the planning application form have been replaced by amended versions on the decision notice and in subsequent appeal documents, including the appeal form. I consider that the amended details given on the appeal form are more usefully representative of the appeal and I have therefore used these details within this decision.
3. Subsequent to the Council's decision, the appellants have provided plans with the appeal which include amendments to the proposed fenestration and the design of the conservatory. I consider that these amendments are of a minor nature and my consideration of the appeal on the basis of the amended plans would not be prejudicial to the interests of third parties. I have therefore considered the appeal on the basis of the amended plans.
4. The Council's decision refers to policies of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (CS) and the Camden Development Policies Document (DPD). However, the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017 (LP) has been adopted and has replaced the CS and the DPD. As part of the appeal process, both parties have had the opportunity to comment on the adoption of the LP. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the adopted development plan and have made no further reference to the replaced documents.
5. The appellants have submitted a proposed S.106 Unilateral Undertaking in respect of front vault works at No 42a adjacent to the highway. I have had regard to this document in my consideration of the appeal.

## **Main Issue**

6. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the host properties and the wider terrace, with due regard to the West Kentish Town Conservation Area.

## **Reasons**

7. The appeal site consists of two properties which are part of a terrace on the edge of the West Kentish Town Conservation Area (CA). The CA is characterised by terraces of well detailed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century houses which contribute to its importance as a designated heritage asset, and the appeal site is part of a terrace highlighted in the CA Statement as making a positive contribution to the CA. Whilst the descriptions in the CA Statement specifically refer to details of the main front elevation of the terrace, I saw that the appeal properties were in part of the terrace where the rear elevations above lower ground floor level had been largely unaltered. Of particular interest was the simple traditional character and rhythm of the rear windows at upper ground floor level and above. I also saw that the rear elevation of this part of the terrace was readily apparent from the public realm of Allcroft Road.
8. Within the context of the largely unaltered rear elevations of the host properties, the proposed extensions would appear as obtrusive box-like additions which would obscure original features, particularly examples of traditional sash windows. The proposed fenestration at upper ground floor level would also be of an overtly modern appearance and would not respect the existing rhythm and character of the rear of the properties, even allowing for the amended design. The use of traditional materials would also not ameliorate the visual impact arising from the design and scale of the development. The proposal would therefore harm the character of the host properties and the wider terrace, and would diminish its contribution to the CA.
9. I have had regard to the existing extensions to the rear of the terrace referred to by the appellants in support of the proposal. However, whilst these extensions may have been permitted by the Council, they served to confirm the incongruous appearance and harm that can be caused by extensions of this nature to the rear of the terrace. I also saw that the more recent two-storey extensions were not as visible from the public realm in comparison to the appeal site. On that basis, the extant extensions did not set a prevailing context for extensions to the rear of the terrace, particularly in relation to the relatively unaltered rear elevation of the extent of the terrace which includes the appeal site.
10. I have also had regard to the examples of rear extensions elsewhere in the CA identified by the appellants. However, whilst there may be a number of similar extensions in the CA, they do not set a prevailing context for the treatment of the rear elevations of properties and do not justify a development which would be as harmful to the specific qualities the terrace as the appeal proposal. In any event, I have determined this appeal on its own merits.
11. The appellants have also referred to a history of extensions and other buildings located to the rear of the terrace, as indicated on maps included with the Design and Access Statement. However, no substantive evidence has been provided that historical development was of a design and scale which justifies the current proposals. The unaltered nature of the rear elevation at upper

ground floor level of the properties which make up the appeal site also indicates that extensions to the rear were limited in scale. Therefore, on the basis of what I have seen and read, the historical form and extent of buildings to the rear of the appeal site and the wider terrace does not weigh significantly in favour of the proposal.

12. The appellants state that the proposed extensions would be subordinate to the host building. In that respect they consider that the proposal meets the advice of Camden Planning Guidance 1 (Design) (CPG1) in that it would retain one full storey below roof eaves/parapet level amongst other criteria. However, I note that CPG1 also emphasises that rear extensions should respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style. For the reasons given above, the proposal would fail to do this. Therefore, whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would be subordinate to the terrace, this does not outweigh my concerns in relation to the unsympathetic design and bulk of the extension and its effect on the rear elevation of the terrace.
13. I am mindful that the proposal would enable the more effective residential use of the properties and improve the quality of family accommodation. I also note the comments made locally in support of the proposal, including the need for family accommodation. However no substantive evidence has been presented to me that the properties are currently unsuitable for family or other forms of residential accommodation or that they are likely to fall into disuse should the proposals not be built. Furthermore, although the proposed works may include improvements to the fabric of the properties, these improvements could be undertaken without the proposed extensions. Therefore, whilst the harm to the significance of the CA may be less than substantial, there are no public benefits which would outweigh the identified harm.
14. I have had regard to the appellants' concerns regarding the Council's handling of the planning application on matters such as appropriate site visits and the request to meet with a Conservation Officer. I also note that the appellants entered into pre-application discussions with the Council and that amendments were made with a view to finding a solution to the Council's concerns. However, these matters do not alter or outweigh my findings on the proposal before me, which I have considered on its planning merits.
15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would be of a design, bulk, scale and siting which would harm the character and appearance of the host properties and the wider terrace. On that basis, the proposal would also fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the LP which seek to ensure high quality design in development which respects local context and character as well as preserving or enhancing the historic environment including conservation areas.
16. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all material planning considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*David Cross*

INSPECTOR