



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 March 2010

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

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Decision date:
19 March 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/E/09/2115302
6a Grange Road, Highgate, London N6 4AP

- The appeal is made under sections 20 and 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for conservation area consent.
- The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Howard & Sue Carter against the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
- The application Ref HGY/2008/0441 is dated 20 February 2008.
- The demolition proposed is the demolition of the existing two storey private family dwelling unit and the erection of a three storey plus basement private family dwelling unit.

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/A/09/2109153
6a Grange Road, London N6 4AP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Howard & Sue Carter against the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
- The application Ref HGY/2008/0440 is dated 20 February 2008.
- The development proposed is the demolition of the existing 1960s two storey family dwelling unit and the erection of a three storey plus basement family dwelling unit designed to be as close as possible to a code 6 carbon neutral home as defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Decisions

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/E/09/2115302

1. I dismiss the appeal and refuse conservation area consent for the demolition of the existing two storey private family dwelling unit and the erection of a three storey plus basement private family dwelling unit.

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/A/09/2109153

2. I dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission for the demolition of the existing 1960s two storey family dwelling unit and the erection of a three storey plus basement family dwelling unit designed to be as close as possible to a code 6 carbon neutral home as defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government.
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Procedural matters

3. The bundle of drawings within the appeal documentation did not include application drawing number 076A/PL01 – *Location Plan*. This drawing confirms the appeal site boundary and a copy was supplied by the Council after the site visit.
4. Revised drawings were submitted to the Council in March 2009. These were placed on the Council's website and interested parties were provided with the opportunity to comment on them. I have therefore taken the revised drawings into consideration.

Main issues

5. These are: (a) whether the development proposed would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area; and (b) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of Grange Road.

Reasons

Conservation area

6. The Highgate Conservation Area is predominantly residential in character and housing densities vary across it. Grange Road is in part of the designation that has many older buildings that are often large and set within mature gardens. There is considerable variety in building design across the conservation area and within the lower density layouts between North Road and Highgate Golf Course. These include recently constructed detached houses of contemporary design and elements of terraced housing, both of which contribute to the street scene in Grange Road. Despite the differing architecture, there remains a suburban openness around developments in this part of the conservation area that is strengthened by the presence of significant areas of open space.
7. The existing built form at No.6a fills much of the plot width and is juxtaposed with No.8. The proposed design for the contemporary replacement dwelling would include a large basement. Its existence would be apparent in aspects from the street due to the glass balustrade around the front lightwell. Such a feature is not readily evident elsewhere in the immediate locality. Even so, the glass balustrade would principally be seen within the context of the proposed contemporary dwelling that it would serve and in this respect would be an appropriate addition to the townscape.
8. A large lightwell to the rear of the proposal would also indicate the presence of the basement. However, No.6a stands in a substantial plot and the proposed structures that would be visible at ground level would be appropriate for the proportions of the site.
9. Reference has been made to a renewed planning permission that would enable the vertical extension of the existing building. Nevertheless, in addition to altering the relationship between the built forms at Nos.6a and 8, the proposed dwelling would significantly reduce the existing gap at first floor level between the side elevation of No.6a and the boundary with No.6. This would occur even though part of the proposed top floor at the front would step in from the property boundary. The rear portion of the additional top floor would be the

full width of that below it. It would contribute to the overall scale of the appeals scheme and noticeably diminish the space around the replacement house.

10. Application drawings for both No.6 and 8 View Road indicate replacement dwellings of contemporary design that include a stepping in of the upper floors from the side boundaries. This reduction in dwelling width at second floor level maintains the openness that is a feature of this location.
11. In contrast, the appeals scheme would result in a strongly cubic form that would emphasise the additional height of the proposed building, its massing and the closure of the gap to No.6. This would occur even though the use and balance of materials in the front elevation would change above the brick and other materials at ground and first floor levels. It has not been established that the proposed use of materials at ground and first floor levels would be inappropriate within the context of the proposed design and those around it. However, the massing of the appeals scheme, its closure of the gap to No.6 and the specific circumstances of No.6a separate the appeal proposal from the other contemporary designs that have been approved for the neighbouring site at No.6 and nearby at 8 View Road and indeed, from other examples provided.
12. The design of the existing dwelling at No.6a makes a limited contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Nonetheless, the substantial demolition of the house in the absence of suitable scheme for its replacement would result in a significant and incongruous gap in the street frontage.
13. National guidance within Planning Policy Guidance 15 – *Planning and the Historic Environment* is clear that new buildings in conservation areas should not seek to directly imitate earlier styles, but that they should be designed with respect for their context as part of a larger whole. I find that by the gap that would be created and the subsequent massing of the replacement house across the width of the plot, the appeals scheme would fail to preserve the openness that is a characteristic of this part of the conservation area. I conclude on the first main issue that the schemes conflict with policy CSV1 of the Haringey Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which requires proposals in conservation areas to preserve or enhance the qualities of the conservation area.

Character and appearance

14. UDP policy UD3 requires development proposals to complement the character of the locality and this is reflected in UDP policy UD4, which highlights the importance of considering the spatial and visual character of the site and area. Grange Road is an unadopted suburban highway. It has dwellings of some age present along it that are sympathetic to the architecture of The Grange, which is the original building on the street and stands at the centre of it. However, other phases of development are also evident on Grange Road that depart from the themes and features within the design of The Grange.
15. The proposed replacement house would add to the contemporary architecture that has been granted planning permission or that is already present around No.6a. A contemporary replacement house on the appeal site would have the potential to make a significant contribution to the street scene in this location. To my mind there is sufficient variation within the street to prevent the

proposal unacceptably consolidating the presence of buildings of a similar style. The variety in materials and set back elements of the ground and first floors of the front elevation would also go some way to reduce the perceived bulk of the building.

16. However, the front and rear elevations of the proposed house would differ considerably in their articulation of the built form. The strongly linear balcony features on the rear elevation and the scale of the upper floor structures would highlight the actual and perceived massing of the house within the plot. I consider that in views from the rear the proposed building, it would appear of sufficient scale within the confines of the site to be a dominant element in the townscape. In addition, the resulting loss of openness that would fail to preserve the character of the conservation area, would also fail to complement the character of the street scene. In these respects I find the proposed replacement house would be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the townscape and conflicts with UDP policies UD3 and UD4.

Other matters

17. This is a suburban area where a certain degree of overlooking of neighbouring properties can be expected and already occurs. Existing first floor rear terraces are present at Nos.6a and 8 that provide views of neighbouring amenity space, where these aspects are not restricted by vegetation. Balcony areas at second floor level are present at 8 View Road and have been the subject of planning permission for No.6. Screens would be installed on proposed balcony areas at No.6a that would restrict views of neighbouring properties to the side. I consider that if such screening were to be employed at the appeal site, the proposal would not unacceptably increase the level of overlooking of neighbouring and nearby properties. Additionally, given the height of the proposed balcony floor levels, it has not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme would be likely to result in direct overlooking of the neighbouring roof light window at No.8.
18. I note the proposal would provide the appellants with a new home that would be of a very sustainable design. However, these matters and the scope of suggested conditions do not outweigh the failure and harm that I have identified.
19. Consequently, for the reasons above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude the appeals should be dismissed.

C Sproule

INSPECTOR