



Proposed relocation of boiler flue.

Flat C, 8 Park Avenue N22 7EX

Heritage Assessment.

Application Site

The application site forms part of an existing first floor flat located within a predominantly residential area.

The property is located within the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area. The first houses in Park Avenue were built in 1879 along the east side from Bounds Green Road to Ranelagh Road. They are substantial two storey semi-detached yellow stock brick and red brick dwellings with a third attic storey in prominent gable ends. The other houses are linked semi-detached and terraced and were completed by 1889. They are of similar scale and appearance, but with gabled dormers. The houses in the section of Park Avenue south of the former railway bridge, completed in the 1890s, are included within the adjoining Wood Green Common Conservation Area. The whole of Park Avenue remains as a largely complete Victorian street of high quality well designed houses with little loss and no major alterations that is an area of architectural quality and historic relevance that make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

A number of properties within the area have had various extensions and alterations undertaken to them including ones similar to that undertaken at the application site.

Proposal

The application is seeking planning permission to relocate the existing boiler flue pipe.

Assessment:

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the Act') establishes the legislative framework for consideration of this application. Section 70(2) of the Act requires the decision-maker in determining planning applications/appeals to have regard to the Development Plan, insofar as it is material to the application/appeal, and to any other material consideration. Where the Development Plan is material to the development proposal it must therefore be taken into account. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application/appeal to be determined in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The key legal provisions relating to the consideration of heritage assets in the planning system are s72 (1) and s66 (1) of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 which state that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area" and "have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

The following policy and guidance documents are recognised as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance

London Plan

HC1 (Heritage conservation and growth)

Local Plan

Development Management DPD (2017):

DM9 Management of the historic environment

Haringey's Local Plan (2013):

SP12 Conservation

Trinity Gardens Conservation Area Character Appraisal

The Trinity Gardens Conservation Area is defined principally by the openness provided by the chain of linked landscaped green spaces comprising Trinity Gardens, Nightingale Gardens and Crescent Gardens, adjacent to the area's main roads; Wood Green High Road and Bounds Green Road which bisect north-south and east-west. These open spaces are bounded and overlooked by a range of properties of domestic scale, which are interspersed with larger religious, educational and institutional buildings. Whilst this is the character for the majority of the conservation area, it is contrasted by the residential streets to the east of Crescent Gardens, which are narrower and of higher density, of domestic scale and a more enclosed nature.

The Trinity Gardens Conservation Area was first designated on 22nd September 1978. The initial boundary included Trinity Gardens, Nightingale Gardens, Crescent Gardens, the George IV Memorial Garden and the roads and buildings immediately adjoining these spaces. The conservation area was extended on 21st June 1988 to include the south eastern section of Bounds Green Road, Ewart Grove, Williams Grove and Pellatt Grove to the east of the High Road and on 11th February 2008 to include the buildings in Park Avenue south to the former railway bridge to create the present day boundary.

Trinity Gardens Conservation Area is centred on a relatively small geographical area, but it is diverse in character and appearance, its sub areas each reflecting distinctive and definable character and appearance. The common characteristics of the sub areas are broadly a function of the relationship between land use, density of development, scale and style of buildings, construction materials, period of development and the influence of soft landscaping and open spaces.

The application property lies within Sub Area 1 of the Conservation Area. Park Avenue was laid out as the formal link between Wood Green and the newly constructed Alexandra Palace and Park to the west opened in 1873, and was lined with street trees in the same way as The Avenue on the north side of the Palace and Park. The first houses were built in 1879 along the east side from Bounds Green Road to Ranelagh Road. They are substantial two storey semi-detached yellow stock brick and red brick dwellings with a third attic storey in prominent

gable ends. The other houses are linked semi-detached and terraced and were completed by 1889. They are of similar scale and appearance, but with gabled dormers. The houses in the section of Park Avenue south of the former railway bridge, completed in the 1890s, are included within the adjoining Wood Green Common Conservation Area. The whole of Park Avenue remains as a largely complete Victorian street of high quality well designed houses with little loss and no major alterations that is an area of architectural quality and historic relevance that make a positive contribution to the conservation area. A number of the properties are now converted into residential flats.

Assessment

Policy sets out that the Council will ensure that the borough's heritage assets and other properties of special character in the borough are conserved, protected and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their special interest, character or appearance and significance. Moreover, Policy HC1 of the London Plan states that development proposals should conserve heritage assets and their significance, by being sympathetic to their significance and appreciation within their surroundings.

Conservation of the Built Environment Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The application site is within the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area and has therefore been assessed against the provisions of the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area appraisal.

The appraisal for the conservation area states that number 8 does make a positive contribution to the conservation area as part of a group of buildings within Park Avenue. The alterations proposed are very minor and will not be seen significantly from the street scene due to their location and height.

The changes proposed here are minor and would help to improve the energy efficiency of the property.

Consideration is needed as to whether the proposed development, which in this case is in the setting of the asset (the Conservation Area), would damage or reduce the heritage significance/ the heritage interest of the asset. Thus, the question is not whether the development would harm the setting of an asset but rather whether the significance of an asset would be undermined by the proposed development being within its setting. If harm is found, one has to judge whether that harm would be substantial or less than substantial. If it is the latter a judgement should be made as to the degree of harm. This is a broad spectrum as is indicated in the Planning Practice Guidance and it should be judged where on that spectrum any identified harm would lie. Given that the Framework requires the decision maker to weigh the less than substantial harm against the public benefits, it is logical that the extent of harm should be considered in order to know what needs to be outweighed. Not all less than substantial harm is therefore equal or even similar in its consequences. The exercise is done on a net basis. Any harm to, and any enhancements of,

the heritage significance of each asset should be weighed in turn to come to an overall conclusion as to whether the significance of the asset would be harmed, enhanced or whether there would be an overall neutral effect.

A sensible way of sense-checking allegations of harm to the heritage significance of a Conservation Area is to look at whether anything in the explanation of the asset's significance would need to change or would no longer be valid in the event of the development taking place. In the case of a Conservation Area, one is looking to see whether the significance of the building and its contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole would be harmed and take into account the full extent of the setting in its 360-degree form.

It is our view that there is nothing within the various Council appraisals that would need to be changed or rewritten and no reference to anything that would no longer be valid if the scheme was implemented. This in our view adds significant weight to the conclusion that the significance of the conservation area would not be harmed by this proposal.

The proposed changes should be seen as modest and would be appropriate in terms of design, materials, form, and siting.

The area is varied in character with modern extensions and alterations to other properties visible within the area. NPPF and Policy D4 of the London Plan require proposals to be of high-quality and to respect the development pattern, scale, height, massing, and the materials and appearance of the surrounding townscape. The Local Plan requires all development to respect the existing context, character, and appearance, taking opportunities available to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions, including being inclusive for all. The design should be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, taking opportunities to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions.

Enhancement of a heritage asset can take many forms, including, but not limited to restoration, repair, removal of inappropriate development, conversion to a more appropriate use or enhancement of the asset's setting. The proposed work will not cause any significant impact on the surrounding environment but would enhance the conservation by increasing the energy efficiency of the flat by upgrading and repairing the existing arrangements.

The London Plan requires the development plan to deliver positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contribute to the accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and social wellbeing. It is our view that the proposed development will help improve the energy efficiency of the flat and the appearance of the building within the conservation area.

Given the context, location, size, and design of the development, it is unlikely that the development as built would give rise to any significant impacts in terms of the Conservation Area. Whilst the existing building is within the Conservation Area, the extent of the fabric that contributes to its heritage significance is essentially retained as part of this proposal.

The NPPF discusses the requirements to maintain heritage assets, and that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Local Policy mirrors the NPPF, in that it states that heritage assets should be protected, conserved and where possible enhanced, emphasising the original form and function where possible. Development proposals should seek the retention and repair of heritage assets.

The building itself is one of many altered and extended within the Conservation Area. The aim of the work is to develop the property to improve its utility and flexibility. The overall approach aims to improve the contribution the property makes to its setting without degrading its significance. Those older features which contribute to the significance, are improved and retained.

The historic environment considerations are the character of the building within the Conservation Area. Special regard has to be had to preserving the building or its setting in the determination of the application in accordance with sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Policies advise that there is a presumption in favour of development proposals which seek to protect, preserve, and where possible enhance, the cultural value, architectural character, visual appearance and setting of heritage assets. It is our view that the development would not have a material impact on the special interest of the building or Conservation Area. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with local planning policy or National Planning Policy.

In this case, as can be seen from the drawings submitted and the comments above, the site has the capacity to accommodate the development in an acceptable manner which meets the needs of future occupants.

Taking into consideration the mix of property sizes, changes to other properties including various extensions visible from the application site, this development would not impact the massing of the building from the streetscene, nor result in any harm to the setting, character, historical integrity or appearance of the building.

There is less than substantial harm to the heritage asset and there is no harm to the setting or character of the existing buildings and wider area. It would result in the opportunity to improve the existing use of the building. It is considered that the harm is not only less than substantial but limited, and it meets all the necessary tests.

The development respects the design, scale, materials, character, appearance and proportions of the existing building and preserves the character and appearance of the surrounding area and wider street scene. The scheme amounts to Sustainable Development which accords with the prevailing policies of the Development Plan and NPPF.