



# ISLINGTON

Planning Service  
Public Protection Division  
Environment and Regeneration  
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<b>PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE A</b>		<b>AGENDA ITEM NO:</b>	B11
<b>Date:</b>	23 March 2011		

<b>Application number</b>	P101376
<b>Application type</b>	Full planning application
<b>Site Address:</b>	30 Huntingdon Street N1
<b>Proposal</b>	New set-back roof storey, with front and rear elevations formed in structural glass

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee resolve to **REFUSE** planning permission as set out in Appendix 1.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Site**

1. 30 Huntingdon Street is a four-storey (lower ground floor, upper ground floor, 1<sup>st</sup> floor and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) terrace house in the Barnsbury Conservation Area. It forms part of a terrace of similar properties (17-33 consecutive Huntingdon Street) on the south side of Huntingdon Street, which back onto the gardens of properties in Thornhill Crescent and Crescent Street.

### **Surroundings**

2. The terrace properties at 17-33 Huntingdon Street were each originally built with a high front parapet, a valley roof and a rear butterfly parapet. Most of them have unaltered roofs. Three have had roof storeys added (Nos. 21, 22 and 25). The roof storeys are slightly set back behind the front parapet, which has limited their impact on the appearance of the front of the terrace in street level views. Raised party parapet walls are however visible above front parapet level in certain views. There are also two points in the frontage on the north side of Bridgeman Road where the rear of parts of the terrace within which 30 is located (including 30 and properties in its immediate vicinity) could potentially be seen over the top of single-storey buildings.

### **Proposal (in Detail)**

3. A new roof storey is proposed, containing two bedrooms and a small bathroom. The front elevation would be set back 1450mm from the back edge of the front parapet. The elevation of the front bedroom would be formed of sliding, folding, aluminium framed, glass doors and the remainder of the front elevation in structural glass. The rear elevation would be entirely formed in structural glass and would sit just behind the retained butterfly parapet.

### **Issues**

4. The main issues arising from this proposal relate to the:
  - Effect on the appearance of the conservation area
  - Effect on neighbour amenity

### **Relevant History**

5. The lower ground and upper ground floors were converted from a doctor's surgery and the property reunited as a single house under the terms of a 2006 planning permission.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **Public Consultation**

6. The proposal was advertised on site and in the press. Letters were also sent to occupants of 26 properties in Thornhill Crescent, Bridgeman Road and Huntingdon Street.
7. In all, a total of six nearby residents responded. The issues raised can be summarised as follows (the paragraph number of this Committee report containing the Officer's response to these comments is provided in brackets):

- The overwhelming weight of objection from the five objectors in Thornhill Crescent is on the grounds of harm to the appearance of the conservation area. They argue that even despite the existence of a few roof extensions toward the eastern end of the terrace, the overwhelming impression for them is of an unbroken run of butterfly parapets and an unaltered roofline. For them, further erosion of this architectural character would be highly undesirable. The proposed non-traditional design of the proposed roof extension is cited as an exacerbating factor. (Paragraphs 13 to 17)
- More than one of the Thornhill Crescent residents also raise objection to the effect of the extension on daylight (Paragraphs 18 and 19) and to what they argue would be an increase in overlooking (Paragraphs 20 and 21). This latter point is made forcefully by the sixth objector, who lives across Huntingdon Street from 30, on the basis that the setback at the front would create a terrace vantage-point. He also talks of light pollution at night, as well as the concern that built-up party parapet walls would be visible in views from Huntingdon Street. (Paragraph 22)

### **Internal Consultees**

8. Conservation and Design Team – The Conservation and Design Team's comments are appended at the end of this report as Appendix 3. They take into account both the potential visibility of the raised party and views from the rear. The conclusion is that the overall circumstances are such as to require a recommendation that the application be refused.

## **RELEVANT POLICIES**

### **National Guidance**

9. The following national and regional guidance is considered particularly relevant to this application:  
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment

### **Development Plan**

10. The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2008 (consolidated with amendments since 2004), the Islington Core Strategy 2011 (which was formally adopted on 17 February 2011 after being found sound by the Planning Inspector at inquiry) and the Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002). The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application:

### **Islington Core Strategy 2011**

#### **Policy CS9 - Protecting and enhancing Islington's built and historic environment**

High quality architecture and urban design are key to enhancing and protecting Islington's built environment, making it safer and more inclusive...

The historic significance of Islington's unique heritage assets and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced whether designated or not. These assets in Islington include individual buildings and monuments, parks and gardens, conservation areas, views, public spaces and archaeology. Active management of conservation areas will continue...

## **Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002)**

### **Conservation and Design Policies:**

#### **Policy D4 - Designing in Context**

Particular attention should be given to (amongst other things) ensuring all alterations and extensions are sympathetic to the building and its surroundings

#### **Policy D25 - Roof extensions in conservation areas**

The following roof design policies will be applied in conservation areas:

- i) subject to other policies, the Council may permit traditional mansard roof extensions in terraces and groups of properties where they already exist. Otherwise roof extensions visible from any street level position or public area will not be permitted where this would be detrimental to the character or appearance of the area. This includes long views from side streets and across open spaces;
- ii) on properties with visible pitched roofs, new or enlarged windows either flush, projecting or recessed will not be permitted on the front or side slopes where this would be detrimental to the character or appearance of the area. Alterations on rear slopes will be considered on their merits;
- iii) permission will not normally be given for the removal or redevelopment of original dormers and gables;
- iv) permission will not normally be given for the demolition or removal of chimney stacks and pots which are visible from the street;
- v) butterfly or V-shaped parapets at the rear of buildings should be retained

### **Designations**

11. The site has the following designations under the Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002):
- Within Barnsbury Conservation Area (CA10). CA10 is identified as being one of the borough's Outstanding Conservation Areas
  - 
  - Locally listed Grade C

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)**

12. The following SPG's and/or SPD's are relevant:

#### **Islington UDP**

#### **Conservation Area Design Guidelines for Barnsbury Conservation Area (2002)**

(Paragraph 10.22) The Council may permit traditional roof extensions on the properties listed in Schedule 10.2, otherwise no roof extension visible from any street level position will be permitted. This includes long views. (The only properties in Huntingdon Street that are mentioned in the Schedule are Nos. 1-14 & 58-70 at the eastern end of the street)

## **Islington Urban Design Guide (2006)**

(Sub-Section 2.4.1) The majority of pre-1914 residential street frontages typically employ a consistent rhythm resulting from a consistent roofline... (Sub-Section 2.4.3) Where the original roofline has been broken, the extent and nature of the existing roof additions will determine the scope for further change. For instance, a single roof extension that pre-dates the adopted UDP on an otherwise unbroken roofline will not normally constitute a precedent for further roof additions. While there are no absolute standards in these circumstances, the scope for roof extensions will normally be dependent on the following criteria

- The number of existing roof extensions, and the extent to which the unity /consistency of the roofline has already been compromised.
- The length of the terrace – a short terrace with existing roof extensions may have the opportunity of its unity being reconciled through allowing additional roof extensions to fill the gaps. On a long terrace, with houses in separate ownership, this is less likely to occur.
- The age of the extensions – an extension allowed before the current UDP standards and policies will not normally set a precedent for new extensions.
- Listed buildings and terraces within conservation areas will also be respectively subject to the detailed individual consideration of the listed building issues and Conservation Area Design Guidelines.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Conservation and Design**

13. In the terrace at 17-33 (consecutive) Huntingdon Street, three out of the nine properties (Nos 21, 22 and 25) have roof extensions of various kinds. It is debatable whether this would justify any new roof extensions, but a proposal for an extension at 20 or 23, say, could at least have resort to the existence of extensions at 21 and 22 as some sort of fig-leaf. A roof extension at No. 30 would appear very much in isolation, as a stand-alone addition.
14. A further distinction between the eastern end of the terrace (where the extensions are) and the western end is that the upper floors of some properties at the western end can be seen from the rear in viewpoints from Bridgeman Road. Admittedly, there is only one specific point in Bridgeman Road from which the rear of 30 might be glimpsed across the rear gardens of properties on Thornhill Crescent, and it is hardly a prominent view. What is more, the view is obstructed when trees in those rear gardens are in leaf. Nevertheless, it is a circumstance that did not have to be taken into account when permissions were granted at 21, 22 and 25 Huntingdon Street.
15. The Urban Design Guide points out that in conservation areas its guidance is to be read in conjunction with the design guidelines for that specific conservation area. The Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines were first formulated in the 1980s and were reviewed prior to their designation as supplementary planning guidance accompanying the Islington Unitary Development Plan 2002. The roof extension at 21

Huntingdon Street was approved in 1979 and that at 22 was approved in 1976, some time before the Design Guidelines for the Barnsbury Conservation Area were written. They would not therefore constitute a precedent for an approval in conflict with the Design Guidelines.

16. The Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines say that in most terraces in the conservation area, including this one, no roof extension visible from any street level position will be permitted. The proposed extension is set back, to hide the front of it in views from directly opposite, but the leading corners of the raised party parapet walls would be visible above the front parapet of the terrace in oblique views from further along Huntingdon Street. As well as this, the rear of the extension would be visible to some degree from Bridgeman Road. The proposal therefore conflicts with the Design Guidelines.
17. The applicants have quoted the extension at 25 as a precedent for granting permission at 30. The extension at 25 was permitted on appeal in November 2004, after an initial refusal by the Council in March of that year. In that case the Council had accepted the idea that the extension would not be readily visible from Huntingdon Street and it was plainly not visible from any street to the rear. The Inspector dismissed arguments by Thornhill Crescent residents that the roof extension would infringe their privacy, or significantly reduce daylight or sunlight. All this led the Inspector to the conclusion that there were not planning objections of sufficient weight as to require the scheme to be refused. This appeal decision of course predates the adoption at the end of 2006 of the Islington Urban Design Guide and its precedent value is therefore significantly reduced.

### **Neighbouring Amenity**

18. On the amenity points raised by neighbours, the conclusion must be broadly the same as that of the Inspector in the 25 Huntingdon Street appeal, who did not consider such criticisms to be of sufficient weight to constitute a reason for refusing the scheme. 30 Huntingdon Street is to the north or northwest of the Thornhill Crescent properties which can readily see it from their rear windows. Sunlight does not shine onto the gardens or rear windows of the Thornhill Crescent properties from this direction, so a roof extension at 30 could not possibly cast shadow toward them.
19. From the daylight point of view, the rear windows of those Thornhill Crescent properties which look most directly at the rear of 30 Huntingdon Street would be 30-plus metres away from the rear of that property. Given this separation, the marginal reduction in daylight associated with the extension would not make any appreciable difference to lighting levels in the rear rooms of the Thornhill Crescent properties.
20. On the point of overlooking, it would not be reasonable for the Council to refuse permission on grounds of a supposed increase in overlooking of the Thornhill Crescent properties. The only difference between the rear glazing of the extension and the rear windows of the floors below would be that the Thornhill Crescent properties would be seen from a higher vantage point. There would be no more overlooking of gardens than there already is – gardens in Islington are inevitably visible from many nearby properties and there can be no guarantee of absolute privacy for garden users.
21. As for overlooking of rooms, the Council's Planning Standards Guidelines accept that, in a borough as densely developed as Islington, suburban standards of separation between properties cannot be required. Even where one property's windows would look

directly into the rear windows of another property, a separation of 18 metres is felt to be the minimum that can be accepted. Here the views are oblique rather than full-on and the separation is well over one and a half times the acceptable minimum.

22. Even at the front, the privacy of neighbours across Huntingdon Street from No. 30 would not be affected. The height of the front parapet above terrace level means the only views over that parapet would be upward and hence would not command any view into front room windows in properties on the other side of the street, not even into rooms in the attic storey. The objector opposite also raised concerns about light pollution, but the parapet would also substantially shield properties and light-spill in their direction would be limited.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

### **Summary**

23. The proposal is considered to conflict both with the Design Guidelines for the Barnsbury Conservation Area and with the principles of the Islington Urban Design Guide 2006 for the reasons given in paragraphs 15 to 24 above.

### **Conclusion**

24. It is recommended that planning permission be refused for the reasons set out in Appendix 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS.

## APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

SCHEDULE OF APPLICATION DETAILS	
<b>Application reference</b>	P101376
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of a roof extension set back approximately 1.5 metres behind the front parapet wall, and with its front and rear faces formed in glass
<b>Drawing numbers</b>	Design and access statement, Site plan, 10HUNEPO1, 10HUNEPO2, 10HUNEPO3, 10HUNPP01b, 10HUNPP02b, 10HUNPP03b, 10HUNPP04, (LBI Registered No. 13761) Letter from Urbanistica Ltd; Copy of Appeal Decision 25 Huntingdon Street; 5 x photos (LBI Registered No. 13762)

<b>Type of application</b>	Full Householder Application
<b>Application received</b>	24-Jun-2010
<b>Application completed</b>	23-Sep-2010
<b>Name of applicant</b>	Elaine Trimble
<b>Name of agent</b>	Tughela Gino, Tughela Gino Architecture Ltd
<b>Case officer</b>	Roger Allen
<b>Area Team</b>	East/West Team
<b>Heritage information</b>	Barnsbury Conservation Area Locally listed Grade C
<b>Library (holding copy of application)</b>	See details at Contact Islington only
<b>Ward</b>	Caledonian Ward
<b>PS2 code description</b>	Householders Development
<b>91st day</b>	23-Dec-2010

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to REFUSE planning permission for the following reason

REASON: The appearance of the terrace would be harmed by the proposed roof extension and the concomitant raised party parapet walls. The proposal conflicts with the terms of the Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines and with the principles embodied in the Islington Urban Design Guide 2006 and in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, as well as with the expectations of Policies D4 and D25 of the Islington Unitary Development Plan 2002.

## **APPENDIX 2 – SITE PLAN**

# APPENDIX 3 – OBSERVATIONS FROM CONSERVATION AND DESIGN TEAM

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING DIVISION INFORMAL CONSERVATION OBSERVATIONS

**Address:** 30 Huntingdon Street, Islington, London, N1 8HW

**Description:** Roof extension

**Application No:** P101376

**Planning Control Case Officer:** Roger Allen

**Drawing Nos:** As on file

**Conservation Case Officer:** Kristian Kaminski

**Date:** 14/07/10

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### Comments:

#### 1. Assessment of architectural and historic significance

The *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* to Planning Policy Statement 5, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, states that local planning authorities should 'assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of an asset, the extent of the asset's fabric to which the significance relates and the level of importance of that significance' (Paragraph 17).

This mid-Victorian terraced property makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. The Barnsbury Conservation Area is considered to be of 'outstanding' importance by virtue of its fine late-Georgian and early-Victorian residential developments, and the area contains some of the best squares and terraces in London.

*Conservation Principles* (English Heritage, 2008) states that decisions concerning the management of a designated heritage asset 'should take account of all the values that contribute to its significance' (p.27). The conservation area has the following heritage values: evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal. Historic fabric is physical evidence which illustrates past human activity and the historic development of Islington. Properties within the area can be appreciated in terms of their high quality design and their contribution to the attractiveness of the area. For these reason the conservation area is valued by the local community.

#### 2. Government policy

Planning Policy Statement 5, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, states that:

- 'There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification (policy HE9.1).

The *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* to Planning Policy Statement 5, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, states that:

- The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets... are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, use, relationship with adjacent assets, alignment and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be acceptable for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset's significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate (Paragraph 178).
- The fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new (Paragraph 179).
- The junction between new work and the existing fabric needs particular attention, both for its impact on the significance of the existing asset and the impact on the contribution of its setting. Where possible it is preferable for new work to be reversible, so that changes can be undone without harm to historic fabric. However, reversibility alone does not justify alteration. If alteration is justified on other grounds then reversible alteration is preferable to non-reversible. New openings need to be considered in the context of the architectural and historic significance of that part of the asset. Where new work or additions make elements with significance redundant, such as doors or decorative features, there is likely to be less impact on the asset's aesthetic, historic or evidential value if they are left in place (Paragraph 180).

### 3. Local policy

The *Unitary Development Plan* (2002) for the London Borough of Islington outlines the Council's strategic policies:

- To preserve and enhance area of special architectural or historic interest as key elements of Islington's character (Strategic Policy 12.3, Conservation Areas)

The *Islington Urban Design Guide* (London Borough of Islington, 2006) and Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines also apply.

### 4. Assessment of the proposals

Informal pre-application advice expressed concern over visibility and loss of the historic roof form. Advice suggested that a contemporary style roof extension may be more likely to be considered acceptable than a traditional mansard roof extension.

The loss of any historic roof structure is always highly regrettable. Furthermore, following a detailed assessment of the site and proposals at application stage it is clear that the property forms part of a substantial run of properties with an unaltered roofline. The proposed roof extension would therefore be contrary to policy contained within the *Islington Urban Design Guide* which stresses the importance of protecting unaltered rooflines to terraces.

It is also thought that the raised parapet walls will be visible from the street. The proposed roof extension would therefore be contrary to policy contained within the Barnsbury Conservation Area Design Guidelines which states that no roof extensions shall be permitted if visible from the public realm. At the rear there are gap views from Bridgeman Road and it would appear

that the extension could be visible through one of these in the context of neighbouring rooflines. The roof extension would also be visible from the gardens of neighbouring properties, which is also a consideration.

In conclusion, the proposed works will have a harmful impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

**5. Recommendation:** Refuse