

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2017

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

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

Decision date: 14 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/16/3165894
58-60 West Hill, London SW18 1RU

- 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 Kanwar Johal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/2197, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is first and second floor rear extension to incorporate two new flats and associated internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, with particular regard to loss of outlook and visual impact, and the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

Living conditions

3. The properties at 58-60 West Hill form part of a terrace of three storey buildings which comprise a mixture of commercial premises and residential units. To the rear are single storey sections which extend across the full length of the plots. Above these are flat-roofed extensions which rise to three storeys in height, but remain below the eaves height of the main frontage buildings. The proposal would create further extensions at first and second floor levels, projecting by around 7.26m from the existing structure.
 4. The Council raises concerns in respect of the impact of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupants at 56 and 62 West Hill, which lie immediately adjacent to the appeal site. A ground floor window serving a habitable room at No 62 would be separated from the development by approximately 2.27m. This window sits close to the rear elevation of No 62, and the outlook from it is already limited by the proximity of the existing three storey rear extension at No 60. The introduction of the new two storey extension, in close proximity, would further limit the outlook to the east from this window. It would create a canyon effect which would result in a harmfully increased sense of enclosure at No 62.
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5. In the case of No 56, a habitable window within the existing single storey element of that property faces west towards the appeal site at a separation distance of around 2.95m. Due to the proximity and height of the new extension, a similar canyon effect would occur, unacceptably curtailing the limited outlook available from this window, and harmfully increasing the sense of enclosure within that dwelling.
6. Drawing these factors together, I conclude that the living conditions of neighbouring occupants at Nos 56 and 62 would be unduly compromised by the proposal. It would therefore fail to comply with Policy DMS1 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (DMPD, March 2016), which, amongst other things, seeks to avoid harm to the amenity of nearby properties.

Character and appearance

7. On my site visit, I saw that the rear elevations at Nos 58 and 60 are difficult to see from the alleyway, and are largely hidden from wider public viewpoints. Whilst the development would be partially visible from Cromford Road and from the alleyway, views would be fleeting, and the development would not be prominent within the wider area. Whilst the development would be relatively large, it would match the width and height of the existing first/second floor rear projections, thus remaining subservient to the height of the main buildings. It would be set back from the boundary wall by approximately 3.76m, which would lessen its dominance over the alleyway.
8. The development would alter the appearance of the rear elevations, and I accept that the building line identified by the Council would be breeched. However, in view of the secluded position of the development, its visual impact on the wider area would be limited. I therefore find that the proposal would not be so harmful to the character or appearance of the surrounding area as to warrant the refusal of planning permission. I thus conclude that the proposal would comply with DMPD Policy DMH5, which sets out criteria for alterations and extensions to existing residential properties.

Conclusion

9. Despite my finding that the development would not harm the character and appearance of the area, it would unacceptably harm the living conditions of neighbours. Taking all other matters into consideration, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR