
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 May 2017

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

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

Decision date: 17 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/17/3167833
22 Gladwyn Road, London SW15 1JY

- 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 Mrs Charlotte Youngman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/5694, dated 28 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is ground floor side and rear extension and associated internal structural works in connection with the incorporation with No 24 ground floor flat.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the provision of housing in the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site at 22 Gladwyn Road is a mid-terraced dwelling in an area of similar houses. The proposal would amalgamate the existing dwelling with the neighbouring one-bedroom ground floor flat at 24a Gladwyn Road, to increase the amount of accommodation available at No 22.
 4. The property at No 22 has three bedrooms, as shown on the submitted plans, and has a garden area. It does not appear to be sub-standard in any way, and may reasonably be described as family-sized accommodation. Policy DMH1 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (DMPD, March 2016) seeks to protect residential land and buildings. It states that development that would lead to the net loss of residential units (including affordable housing units) will only be permitted where (i) the proposal involves combining separate non family-sized flats in order to create a family-sized unit, and (iv) the proposal would not result in a loss of smaller affordable housing units for larger family private market units.
 5. I am satisfied that criteria (ii) and (iii) of DMPD Policy DMH are not relevant in this case. There is no evidence before me to suggest that the flat at 24a Gladwyn Road may be categorised as affordable. As a result, there would be no conflict with criteria (iv) of DMPD Policy DMH1.
-

6. Nonetheless, the appeal scheme would lead to the net loss of one residential unit. As No 22 is already a family-sized home, however, the development would not lead to the creation of a family-sized unit. The development would therefore fail to comply with criteria (i) of DMPD Policy DMH1.
7. The appellant argues that the area is well stocked with one-bedroom flats, and that this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future. Whilst that may be so, the aim of the DMPD Policy DMH1 is to prevent the net loss of residential units. There is nothing in the wording of the policy to exempt one-bedroom flats from the protection it affords.
8. The accompanying text to DMPD Policy DMH1 refers to the Council's aim, as set out in their Core Strategy, of maintaining the range of dwelling sizes available in the existing stock, especially family-sized housing with gardens. However, there is nothing in the wording of the policy that would support the loss of a smaller residential unit in order to increase the size of an already existing family-sized house.
9. Paragraph 3.5 of the supporting text refers to the identification within the Wandsworth's Strategic Housing Market Assessment for larger accommodation for families, amongst others. However, once again, the text clarifies that the de-conversion of flats will be supported to create family-sized houses. The de-conversion of flats to augment family-sized units is not supported by the policy. The combining of more than one house will be resisted, as highlighted by the appellant, but such a consideration is not relevant to the appeal scheme.
10. Drawing these factors together, I therefore conclude that the proposal would result in the unacceptable net loss of a residential unit, thus adversely affecting the provision of housing in the area. In the absence of any compelling argument to set aside the provisions of DMPD Policy DMH1 in this respect, I consider that the proposal would be in conflict with it. Furthermore, DMPD Policy DMH1 is consistent with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which, at paragraph 50, sets out the need for a mix of housing.
11. For the reasons above, and taking all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR