
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

by Andy Harwood CMS MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/17/3175471
30 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AF

- 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 Dr E Potgieter against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2016/7332, dated 13 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is "2 No 1 bed flats within a 2 storey extension following the demolition of a single storey studio flat. Existing iron railings to front elevation replaced with new brick wall and piers. Additional hard and soft landscaping including reconfiguration of existing basement steps".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for "2 No 1 bed flats within a 2 storey extension following the demolition of a single storey studio flat. Existing iron railings to front elevation replaced with new brick wall and piers. Additional hard and soft landscaping including reconfiguration of existing basement steps" at 30 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/7332, dated 13 December 2016, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The plans referenced on the Council's decision notice erroneously included '1748_30(D)' which, it has been confirmed, should have been '1748_30(C)'. I will deal with the appeal on the basis of that plan and the others referred to on the Council's decision.
3. I have used the description of the proposal from the planning application form which adequately describes what has been applied for.

Main Issues

4. Whether the proposed building would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the West Putney Conservation Area (CA). The effect of the proposal upon living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site includes a 2-storey detached building, with a basement

currently used as a dental surgery, on the western side of Putney Hill. There is a variety to the style and age of development nearby within the CA including some modern blocks but some like the building at the appeal site, are more traditional. The front of the building at the appeal site retains its mid-Victorian character as referred to by the Council. Some other buildings on this side of Putney Hill particularly to the south are also traditional with the number of more modern properties increasing towards the centre of Putney to the north of the site. The Council in referencing its CA appraisal¹ for this part of the CA refers to Nos 30, 32, 32a and 34-36 being notable as a surviving group for a similar era. The front of the building with the forecourt is stated as appearing sterile with the railings not upholding the character of the area.

6. The rear of the building appears to have been altered with a large 2 storey extension and a single storey element positioned approximately centrally on the rear elevation. These, along with a roof-dormer (proposed for retention), are a complex arrangement of structures which dominate and hide some of the original form of the building. These existing extensions do not have a positive significance upon the character and appearance of the CA.
7. A previous proposal at this site was refused by the Council and dismissed at appeal². The proposal in that case was for the erection of a detached single storey dwelling to the rear of the garden which is very different from the current proposal which would involve the part 2 storey and part single storey extension at the rear of the existing building following removal of the existing extensions. In that previous appeal, my colleague considered that the proposal would result in the openness of the rear garden being significantly diminished. The collective openness of the area in the immediate vicinity had been identified as contributing positively to the site and its surroundings. I give substantial weight to my colleague's views in this regard. I agree that the undeveloped rear of the site is significant to the spacious feel at the rear of site in this part of the CA.
8. There is some contention about the age of the rearward parts of the existing buildings at No 28, the adjoining building to the north of the site and how that adjoining building has come about. Whenever the building next door was constructed it forms part of the character and appearance of the area and affects the appeal site. It includes a high wall on the boundary with the appeal site and a tiered form. Furthermore other buildings nearby within the CA have been subject to alterations on their rear elevations including No 32.
9. The proposed 2 storey part of the extension would be lower than the existing 2 storey extension. This would extend further into the garden therefore at a higher roof level than the existing single storey extension. However this would be compact in form not extending beyond the very high wall of No 28. The proposed single storey element would extend further into the garden but it would appear as a minor element tiered down as is the case with the form of No 28. The roof of both parts would respect the form of the original building. Although the new structure would not be symmetrical it would be a simple design set well away from both side boundaries. The proposal would be a more straightforward addition than the existing structures proposed for demolition and would reveal the upper part of the main part of the building.

¹ West Putney Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

² APP/H5960/W/15/3136268

10. The proposal would extend to around the rear building line of the neighbouring building at No 28. It would not intrude far into the more sensitive area towards the rear of the garden and would be seen up against the side wall of No 28 from adjoining properties to the south. It is in an area largely enclosed by that neighbouring building. This would not harm the openness of the garden where it relates to adjoining open areas or the wider CA.
11. I agree with the Council that the boundary wall proposed at the front of the building in prominent view from Putney Hill, would be a further enhancement of the appearance of the property and therefore the CA.
12. The proposal would not be harmful to the host building and by revealing the higher parts of the original building would cause a minor enhancement of the building. This is in addition to creating a more appropriate front enclosure of the front of the site. In relation to the first main issue, the proposal would enhance the character or appearance of the CA. This would comply with Policy IS3 of the Core Strategy³ (CS) as well as Policies DMS1, DMS2 and DMH5 of the Development Management Policies Document⁴ (DMD). The proposal would constitute a good design, as required by paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework).

Living conditions

13. The proposal would be off-set from both boundaries. The distance from the boundary with the joint boundary with No 32, the property that the Council considers would be most affected, is by their calculation 4.2m. That would be a substantial gap and would in my view be sufficient for the proposal to not have an enclosing impact upon those adjoining residents whether in their garden or inside the building. The 2 storey part of the proposal would extend beyond the depth of the addition on No 32. However the window in the side of that part of the building would be a substantial distance from the boundary. The Council has also provided photographs taken from the windows within No 32. Although occupants looking out of the windows would see the increased depth of building, the development would not be so close as to bring about a sense for those people of being enclosed or hemmed-in by it.
14. The windows indicated within the rear of the proposed 2 storey extension would be further towards the rear of the site than the existing windows at that level. However this would only allow for constrained sideways views towards the adjoining properties. The proposal would not have an unreasonable impact upon the privacy of adjoining residents.
15. In relation to this main issue, the proposal would not have a harmful impact upon living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties with particular regard to outlook. The proposal would comply with DMD Policies DMS1 and DMH5 by reason of not harming the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties. The requirement in paragraph 17 of the Framework to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings would be achieved.

Other Matters

16. From the evidence I consider that the requirement within the Framework to

³ Wandsworth Local Plan, Core Strategy, adopted March 2016

⁴ Wandsworth Local Plan, Development Management Policies, adopted March 2016

boost significantly the supply of housing is greater than any suggested need to retain the building in a form that could be easily converted back to a single dwelling. I have no evidence that the lack of parking at the property would cause highway safety or convenience concerns. This is an urban area close to a wide range of services and facilities including the public transport network where occupants would not rely upon private vehicle use.

17. The Council has stated that a pre-commencement condition would be sufficient to secure the trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order, as well as having interim protection as they are within the CA. The main potentially affected tree of importance to the character of the CA is the large specimen close to the adjoining site with No 32. I agree that the spacing of the proposed building from this tree and others would appear sufficient to enable their protection and have therefore attached a condition to achieve this along with other landscaping. The coniferous trees close to the boundary with No 28 have a limited amenity value and the plans do not show this for retention and I agree that this is unnecessary to protect through the planning condition.

Conditions

18. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty that the development will be implemented as proposed.
19. I have attached condition similar to those suggested by the Council with some alteration to ensure that they conform with the advice in paragraph 206 of the Framework. These are necessary to ensure the development conforms with the character and appearance of the area, to ensure opportunity for residents to access the development by using cycles as well as the energy and water efficiency of the development.
20. The construction of the development may cause some noise, disturbance and dust for adjoining occupiers. The Council has not suggested a planning condition related to these effects. I have no evidence to indicate that existing environmental controls would be insufficient to adequately control such matters and have not therefore included a planning condition regarding this.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

A Harwood

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: '1748_20 A'; '1748_21 D'; '1748_22 D'; '1748_23 A'; '1748_30 C'; '1748_31 C'; '1748_32'; and '1748_33 C'.
- 3) No development shall commence until there shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a scheme of landscaping. The scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the

land, identify those to be retained and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development.

- 4) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
- 5) The external materials to be used in the approved development shall match those of the existing building.
- 6) Notwithstanding the details already shown, no development shall commence until there shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority further details of arrangements for the storage of refuse. The details as agreed shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings hereby approved and retained for the lifetime of the development.
- 7) Notwithstanding the details already shown, no development shall commence until there shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority further details of cycle storage racks. The details as agreed shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings hereby approved and retained for the lifetime of the development.
- 8) Prior to the first occupation of the approved development, evidence to demonstrate that the development has achieved at least a 19% reduction in CO₂ emissions below the maximum threshold set in Building Regulations Part L 2013, shall be submitted for agreement by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The development shall not be occupied until this has been demonstrated and agreed by the Local Planning Authority and the measures shall be retained for the lifetime of the development.
- 9) The development shall achieve a maximum water use of 105 litres per person per day (plus 5 litres for outside use) in line with the Water Efficiency Calculator for new dwellings from the Department of Communities and Local Government (or any advice superseding that). Prior to first occupation, evidence to demonstrate measures to ensure that that the internal water consumption of the development will not exceed 105 litres per person per day must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The details as agreed shall be implemented prior to the occupation of any of the approved accommodation and the measures shall be retained for the lifetime of the development.