
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 August 2017

by L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 29 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/17/3177143

10 College Gardens, London, SW17 7UG

- 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 Ian Wale against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2017/1520, dated 13 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey groundfloor extension to existing dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area and on the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 8 College Gardens.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling, No. 10 College Gardens, occupies a corner plot. The front of the house, and its main entrance, is accessed via a pedestrian lane which runs from College Gardens. The side of the property addresses the road. The neighbouring properties, No's. 2, 4, 6 and 8, front College Gardens with No's 2 and 4 sitting forward of No's 6, 8 and the side of 10. A garage block at the side of No. 2 sits further forward again. The building line therefore has a distinctive staggered appearance.
4. The proposal is to introduce a single storey extension to the side of No. 10 projecting towards College Gardens at the boundary with No. 8.

Character and appearance

5. Due to its location and orientation, the proposed side projection would be prominent in views from the street and would have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the area.
6. The proposed extension would breach the established staggered building line and would fail to respect the design and form of the group of buildings of which it is part. Furthermore, the extension would be large, projecting substantially from the existing side wall, and would unbalance the appearance of the host

dwelling. Thus, the proposal would not appear as a subservient addition but would rather visually compete with the existing building.

7. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would appear as a bulky and incongruous addition which would be at odds with the existing pattern of development and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.
8. I note that the existing ivy covered fence would remain and would provide some screening and I also acknowledge the proposed use of matching materials. However, these things would not be sufficient to mitigate the harm I have identified above.
9. For these reasons, the proposal would fail to conform with Policy DMH 5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document, March 2016 (DMPD) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that an extension is well designed and is not so large that it dominates and competes with the original building. The proposal would also be at odds with Policy DMS 1 of the DMPD and Policy IS 3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Core Strategy, March 2016 (CS) which broadly require development to have a high level of physical integration with its surroundings and contribute positively to local spatial character.
10. The proposal would also fail to meet the guidance set out within the 2015 Wandsworth Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document Housing (SPD) which seeks to ensure that extensions respect the form and proportions of the original house and are not overly large.

Living conditions

11. The proposal would project significantly above the existing fence which defines the boundary between No's. 8 and 10 and would also sit higher than the roofline of No. 8's entrance porch. The proposal would present an undesirably large expanse of blank brickwork to No. 8.
12. Furthermore, the new projection would combine with the staggered building line to enclose the front of No. 8 to an unacceptable degree. The extension would, therefore, have an overbearing impact on No. 8 to the detriment of the living conditions at that property.
13. Due to its size and the orientation of the properties, the proposal would cause some limited loss of light to the front garden and front door area of No. 8. This, in my view, would be limited to a small portion of the day but nevertheless adds to my overall concerns regarding the proposal.
14. I therefore conclude that the proposal would appear overbearing and would create an undue sense of enclosure to the front of No. 8. The proposal would also reduce light levels to the front of the dwelling. Accordingly, the proposed extension would cause harm to the living conditions at No. 8 College Gardens.
15. The proposal would therefore fail to accord with Policy DMS 1 of the DMPD which states that planning permission will only be granted where development does not harm the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties. The proposal would also fail to meet the guidance set out in the SPD in this regard.

Other matters

16. I noted a number of other examples cited by the appellant. However, the majority of these are situated in a different context and do not have the same relationship with the group of buildings in which they sit. In any event, I am not aware of the specific planning context surrounding these examples and each case must be treated on its own merits. The existence of other examples does not justify perpetuating the harm I have identified.
17. I note that the appellant suggests that the Council Officer was originally planning to recommend approval. However, advice given prior to the decision being taken is given without prejudice and the decision maker is not bound to follow it. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions at No. 8 is a matter of judgement. Consequently, for the reasons given above, I find nothing sufficiently compelling to alter my conclusion that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 8 College Gardens.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, and having considered all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

L J O'Brien

Appointed Person