
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2018

by J Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/17/3181365
65 Clifford Road, Hounslow TW4 7LR.

- 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 R K Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00280/65/P15, dated 21 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is proposed first floor rear extension to surgery.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the area; and
 - the living conditions of existing and future neighbouring occupiers at 67 Clifford Road, with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site lies at the junction of Clifford Road and Basildene Road, two roads primarily occupied by two-storey terraced houses. Interspersed with the terraced houses are some two-storey detached houses. 65 Clifford Road is a large, detached property which was originally constructed as a house. The building has three prominent two-storey bay windows two to the front and one to the side elevation, porches to the front and side, a number of advertising signs and distinctive brick boundary treatments.
4. No 65 has previously been extended, with a single-storey rear extension running adjacent to the shared boundary with No 67 to the end of what would originally have been the appeal property's rear garden, and a two-storey side and rear extension. A number of planning applications and appeals have previously been submitted in relation to the appeal site, including an allowed appeal¹ for a single-storey rear extension, and a dismissed appeal² (the 2017

¹ APP/F5540/A/2157917, decision issued 14 November 2011.

² APP/F5540/W/16/3163186, decision issued 17 February 2017.

- appeal) for a first floor rear extension. The ground floor of No 65 currently provides the reception and waiting room as well as consulting rooms for the surgery, while the first floor provides a bedroom for on-call staff, a staff room, and a separate self-contained residential unit.
5. Given its position on the corner of two roads and its size and architectural treatments, No 65 is prominent within the streetscene. Its considerable size in comparison to the majority of surrounding houses, its appearance, and advertising signage all contribute to the building being read as a community facility, rather than a residential property.
 6. The proposed development would comprise a first floor rear extension over the full width of the existing single-storey rear extension at No 65. The proposed extension would be approximately 10.6m in length and would be set in approximately 1.2m from the end of the existing single-storey extension. Both the end of the single-storey extension and the proposed first floor extension would have pitched roofs. The proposed development would provide additional rooms for the surgery, including an ultrasound room, nurse's room, toilet and kitchen.
 7. Given the visibility of the appeal site at the junction of Clifford Road and Basildene Road, the proposed development would appear both bulky and incongruous from a number of public vantage points. Despite a small set-in from the end of the existing single-storey extension and that there would be no visible change when viewed from the front, the open side views of the extended building at No 65 would be of a scale unrelated to the existing building and the neighbouring buildings on both roads.
 8. Notwithstanding the positioning of windows reflecting the pattern of fenestration to the existing building, matching building materials, and similar pitch, ridge and eaves detail to ensure that the roofing of the proposed development would be more cohesive with the existing building, the proposed development would dominate the existing building by reason of its size and height. Although the appellant has attempted to reduce the effect of the proposed development following the 2017 appeal decision, it would still fail to be subservient to the existing building and would infill the majority of the space between No 65 and adjacent 80a Basildene Road. While it would no longer appear almost as a separate building to No 65 due to the alterations to the roof of the proposed development, the overall size of the existing and proposed development together would fail to respect the existing building or the scale of neighbouring residential development.
 9. Concluding on this main issue, the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the policies CC1 and CC2 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015 - 2030 (the Local Plan) and policy 7.6 of the London Plan. Policies CC1 and CC2 require development to sensitively and creatively respond to an area's character and should respond to the wider context and its urban structure, form and function, and the layout, grain, massing and height of surrounding buildings. Policy 7.6 of the London Plan requires development to complement local character. It would also contravene paragraphs 17, 58, and 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which respectively seek to secure high quality design; respond to local character; and confirm that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take

the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Living Conditions

10. The flank wall of the existing single-storey extension at No 65 lies approximately 0.75m from the appeal site's western boundary with the rear garden of No 67, a two-storey end of terrace residential property with a relatively short rear garden. There is a brick boundary wall between the properties which is slightly higher than the existing single-storey extension at No 65. Nos 65 and 67 are separated at the side by a 2.7m wide alleyway between the buildings.
11. The proposed development would run the majority of the length of the rear garden of No 67 and would be substantially higher at 5.3m to eaves level than the existing boundary wall between Nos 65 and 67. Despite the gap between Nos 65 and 67 provided by the alleyway, given both the height and length of the proposed development and its proximity to No 67's rear garden, it would enclose the garden of No 67 on one side. This would substantially diminish the outlook from the rear windows of the house at both ground and first floor levels as well as from the rear garden and would result in an overbearing effect on the occupiers of No 67.
12. Additionally, the proposed development would reduce the amount of light entering the rear garden of No 67 at some points in the day. The appellant has asserted that the garden is south-facing and is sufficiently wide to ensure that levels of light reaching the garden would not be significantly reduced. However, I agree with the findings of the previous Inspector in this regard. As the proposed development would be sited to the east of No 67, the height and length of the proposed development would be likely to have the greatest effect on light in the mornings, shading a significant amount of No 67's garden.
13. While I note that some attempts have been made since the 2017 appeal to change the proposed roof and length of the proposed development to mitigate its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 67, this does not significantly reduce the harm I have identified above.
14. Although no objections were received from neighbouring occupiers and no other properties would be affected in respect of living conditions, this does not render the proposed development acceptable. As for the 2017 appeal, I have considered the effect of the proposed development on both existing and future occupiers of No 67. I note that the proposed development would include obscure-glazed windows facing No 67, which would ensure the privacy of both patients and occupiers of No 67. However, this does not outweigh my concerns with regard to outlook and light.
15. Concluding on this main issue, the proposed development would cause harm to the living conditions of existing and future occupiers of 67 Clifford Road with particular regard to outlook and light. This would be contrary to policy CC2 of the Local Plan and policy 7.6 of the London Plan. Policy CC2 requires, amongst other things, development to provide adequate outlook, minimise overbearingness and overshadowing, and ensure sufficient sunlight and daylight to adjacent dwellings. Policy 7.6 of the London Plan seeks to ensure that a development will not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land or buildings. Furthermore, it would not be compatible with the

requirement at paragraph 17 of the Framework to seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Other Matters

16. I acknowledge that the proposed development would provide additional space to support the provision of services such as blood tests and ultrasound examination, which now form part of GP services rather than being hospital-based. The appellant and the Council have noted that the principle of the improvement and modernisation of healthcare facilities is acceptable in accordance with policy CI3 of the Local Plan. I concur with this view and also note the support from NHS England in respect of a London Improvement Grant. However, while the proposed development would have clear benefits for patients' wellbeing through the provision of improved healthcare facilities at a local level, these benefits do not outweigh the harm I have identified above with regard to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Thus, the proposal would not represent sustainable development in line with the Framework.
17. The appellant has discussed the importance of guarding against loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs; and ensuring that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community in line with paragraph 70 of the Framework. While I do not doubt that the provision of modernised and enhanced facilities at the surgery would be beneficial to its patients, I have little information on the future viability of the surgery at this location.
18. The appellant has made reference to paragraph 14 of the Framework and the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this instance, I have not applied paragraph 14 of the Framework as the proposed development would not accord with the development plan as set out in the paragraphs above. Furthermore, to my knowledge, the development plan is not absent or silent and relevant policies are not out-of-date.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Gilbert

INSPECTOR