



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/19/3229563
143 West Grove, Woodford Green IG8 7NW

- 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 George Beitis against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 4800/18, dated 21 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 11 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of 1 bedroom dwelling on the land adjoining 143 West Grove.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The applicant has described the proposal as a 1 bedroom dwelling, however the dwelling is arranged over three floors and includes on the plans a room labelled as a study within the loft. This room is larger than the bedroom shown on the first floor plan and is of sufficient size to accommodate a double bed and therefore could realistically be used as a second bedroom. Therefore I have considered the development on the basis that it is a 2 bedroom dwelling.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed dwelling on the character and appearance of the area.
 - The effect of the proposed dwelling on the living conditions of 141 West Grove, with particular reference to outlook.
 - Whether the development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular reference to internal living standards.
 - The effect of the proposed parking arrangement on both highway and pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The site is located on the east side of West Grove, a residential street with terrace properties on both sides. The terrace dwellings have a uniform

appearance with bay windows a predominant feature of the area. 143 West Grove comprises a two storey dwelling with attached single garage.

5. One off street parking space is available along the frontage of the site with an additional space provided within the garage. The garage has been separated from 143 West Grove following the erection of a fence within the rear garden and now comprises a separate plot.
6. The development comprises an additional dwelling attached to the end of 143 West Grove, following the demolition of the existing garage. The dwelling would maintain the ridge height of 143 West Grove and the style of fenestration would reflect that of the host property with the inclusion of a bay window and brick arches above the first floor windows. However, whilst the dwelling would use appropriate architectural detailing to match neighbouring dwellings, the narrow width of the plot results in a cramped form of development which is at odds with the neighbouring dwellings.
7. The proposal includes a rear dormer which the Council considers to be incongruous and have highlighted that it fails to comply with the Householder Design Guide, a copy of which I have not been provided. The dormer whilst not centrally located is on the rear elevation and as a result of the narrow width of the dwelling is discreet in terms of its overall size and scale and therefore I do not find that this element in itself is harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
8. In conclusion, given my overall findings that the scale of the dwelling, in terms of its narrow frontage, is contrary to the existing pattern of development, the proposal fails to comply with Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030, March 2018 (LP) which requires high quality design which respects the local character of the area and makes a positive architectural and urban design contribution to its context and location. The development as a result of its overall width, disrupts the pattern of existing development and would fail to positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

Living conditions – existing neighbours

9. The two storey flank wall of the dwelling would project beyond the rear elevation of 141 West Grove, although this projection is limited, given its close proximity to the boundary and the existing two storey rear extension at 141 West Grove, this will result in a tunnel effect which will lead to an overbearing sense of enclosure. This in combination with the single storey rear extension off the rear of the dwelling will result in an unsatisfactory relationship to 141 West Grove, having regard to the presence of ground floor and first floor windows within the rear elevation of 141 West Grove.
10. In conclusion, the development would have an adverse impact on living conditions of the occupants of 141 West Grove with particular reference to outlook and therefore fails to comply with Policy LP26 of the LP which seeks to ensure development does not result in any adverse impact upon neighbouring properties having regard to outlook.

Living conditions – future occupants of the development

11. As set out above, due to the size of the room in the loft which could reasonably be used as a bedroom, I have considered the development on the basis that it is a 2 bedroom dwelling. Having regard to Policy 3.5 of the London Plan and

Policy LP29 of the LP a 2 bedroom dwelling is required to provide 79 sqm of internal space. The evidence before me indicates that the dwelling does not provide sufficient internal space to comply with this policy. As a consequence, the dwelling would represent an oppressively confined form of residential accommodation, that would be significantly harmful to its occupants.

12. In conclusion, the development fails to provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular reference to internal living standards and is contrary to Policy 3.5 of the London Plan and Policy LP29 of the LP which requires planning proposals to comply with the national internal space standards and Policy LP26 of the LP which ensures high standards of accommodation for housing in terms of size, quality and arrangement of internal space.

Highway Safety

13. 143 West Grove benefits from off street parking, unlike the majority of dwellings in West Grove who rely on on-street parking. At the time of my visit I witnessed cars parked on both sides of the street and whilst some spaces were available I would expect that there would be higher demand for spaces in the evenings.
14. It has been put to me that the existing garage is not a useable parking space due to the presence of other parked cars on the street which makes it difficult to access. However, anecdotal evidence from interested parties indicates that the garage has been utilised for parking by previous occupiers. Therefore, without evidence to demonstrate that the garage cannot be utilised for parking I have taken it that the site currently benefits from 2 off street parking spaces, including the space in front of the property, where a car was parked at the time of my visit.
15. The appellant suggests that the development would still benefit from 2 parking spaces, as following the development the dropped kerb will be reinstated along the frontage of the site which will enable 2 cars to be parked on the street. However, these cannot be allocated to either the existing dwelling or that proposed, and would become part of the general parking within the street, which I have already seen is at a premium.
16. Policy LP23 of the LP requires that where development proposals involve a reduction of existing off-street car parking, appellants need to demonstrate that sufficient parking will remain in the area to serve local needs; it also suggests that this can be achieved through the submission of a parking stress survey, where new developments are unable to achieve the standards set out within the London Plan.
17. In the absence of a parking stress survey and following my observations of on-street parking during my visit I am unable to conclude that the development would not increase demand for off street parking in the area which would result in congestion, safety concerns and poor residential amenity, contrary to policy LP23 of the LP.

Other matters

18. I have taken into account that the development would result in an additional dwelling that would contribute to housing supply in the area. Whilst there

would be modest benefits associated with the provision of an additional dwelling, these do not outweigh the considerable harm identified above.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G. Pannell

INSPECTOR