
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2020

by M Philpott BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/19/3238767

1 High Street, Wanstead, London E11 2AA

- 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 Messrs E, R and D Shternzis (Eldar Properties Ltd) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1370/19, dated 20 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'erection of two-storey side extension to create new 1 x bed dwelling'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with due regard to the Wanstead Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site forms part of a mostly 3 storey building that is adjacent to the signalised junction of High Street, Hermon Hill and New Wanstead. The building fronts mainly onto Hermon Hill but turns the corner onto High Street.
4. The original building is Victorian; however, it has since been extended and altered significantly. Both its Hermon Hill and High Street elevations are characterised by yellow brick walls with red brick banding, formally arranged and uniformly designed windows and, aside from 2 front facing gables, predominantly pitched and hipped roofs.
5. The building is in residential use except for a commercial unit that is on the corner of Hermon Hill and High Street. A recent extension above the commercial unit attaches to 1b High Street and is similar in appearance to it, which facilitates a positive transition around the corner and provides continuity in the appearance of the Hermon Hill and High Street elevations. Adjacent to no. 1b are commercial units that link it and the appeal building to a long terrace of 3 storey properties. Many of the properties within the terrace appear Victorian and share characteristics with the appeal building and no. 1b.
6. The Wanstead Village Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that the special quality of the conservation area resides in a jigsaw of different elements

which coalesce to form a distinctive harmonious whole. The conservation area includes High Street and the appeal building, no. 1b and the rest of the terrace is within it. Although they are separated by the commercial units, the appeal building and no. 1b form a distinctive group of buildings with the rest of the terrace that has a cohesive appearance and contributes positively to the special interest of the conservation area.

7. The appeal building is the only property within Hermon Hill that is within the conservation area. The nearby properties outside the conservation area vary in age, design and architectural merit. The appeal building is next to Devon House, which is a comparatively modern, 2 storey building and the proposed extension would be closer to it than the buildings within High Street. However, the appeal building is nonetheless an established part of, and the extension would be visible on approach to, the conservation area, particularly in the winter months when the trees along Hermon Hill are not in leaf.
8. The extension would match many of the existing building's details. However, the extension's 'gambrel-style' roof and the undercroft would not be reflective of the characteristics of the building or the terrace. Additionally, the size of the window proposed above the undercroft and its number of panes would differ from the other windows in the Hermon Hill elevation. As a result of these issues, the extension would appear as an incongruous addition to the building and the conservation area.
9. Although the extension would provide an appropriate transition in height from the 3 storey part of the appeal building to Devon House, its roof design would contrast poorly with the hipped roof of the appeal building to which it would be adjacent. In addition, the extension's walls would project closer to Devon House than its roof, with the parapet wall adjacent to the roof accentuating this. Consequently, the extension would appear unbalanced, cramped and awkward between Devon House and the rest of the appeal building to the detriment of the Hermon Hill street scene.
10. The appellant has indicated that the extension would infill a gap between the appeal building and Devon House that serves no real purpose in townscape terms and screen an existing parking area from view. However, I do not consider that these matters overcome the harm to the appeal building, the street scene and the conservation area.
11. I acknowledge that the design of the proposal has been influenced by the ceiling height and the unit size standards that are set out by the London Plan's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards. However, these matters do not address the harm identified.
12. In accordance with paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I attach great weight to the harm to the conservation area. Given that the development would be small in scale relative to the extent of the conservation area, I find that the harm is less than substantial in this instance. In such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development.
13. The appellant has put forward that the development would provide a new dwelling in a highly accessible location that would help meet demand for small one bed flats in Wanstead. In addition, economic benefits would arise from the

construction of the development and the occupiers spending money locally. However, the scale and consequently the public benefits of the development are small. Taking into account the considerable importance and weight that I must give to the harm to the conservation area, I do not find that the benefits are sufficient to outweigh the harm.

14. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area and fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Wanstead Village Conservation Area. The proposal is contrary to policies LP26 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan and the Framework which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development is reflective of the character and appearance of its surroundings and protects conservation areas.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given, the appeal shall not succeed.

Mark Philpott

INSPECTOR