



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020

by K Savage BA MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/20/3247037

21-25 York Road, Ilford IG1 3AD

- 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 Ikram Wahid (Metro Properties Limited) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 3877/19, dated 1 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is first, second and third floor extensions, incorporating a mansard roof to the front elevation and internal/external alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on i) the character and appearance of the area, and ii) the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, with particular regard to outlook, noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal relates to an existing hotel premises extending across three properties on York Road, which form part of a longer terrace of consistent period buildings standing two storeys in height each with two storey bay windows and Juliet balconies above the front entrances. Three of the other buildings in the group retain original brick walls, whilst the appeal properties and one other have been rendered and painted. To either side of this group are taller, three storey terraces with traditional valley roofs behind front parapets. The adjacent building, No 19, is separated by a single width access road to the rear, and has had a mansard roof added to create a four storey building. The hotel has also extended to the full depth of the site at ground and first floor levels, covering the whole site area with the exception of a rear service courtyard accessed via the side service road.
4. The proposal seeks to add two storeys to each of the buildings at Nos 21, 23 and 25. The proposed third floor would be a straight extension of the elevations upwards, with the fourth floor proposed as a mansard extension. The extensions would also project over the existing full depth additions at the rear.
5. The proposed extensions would be very substantial in scale, effectively doubling the height of the buildings. From the front, the extensions would be immediate, dominant and highly incongruous additions which would destroy

the consistent scale and form of the wider terrace. Whilst the appellant seeks to emulate the height of the building at No 19, this forms part of a separate terrace of clearly different scale and design, and the mansard roof to this building is an anomaly within the terrace which is otherwise absent them. To my mind, the proposed extensions would not be read in context with the lone example at No 19, but as excessive and highly discordant changes to the terrace within which the properties sit.

6. The full depth extensions at the rear are already significant in size, but reduce in massing towards the rear, providing some articulation and subservience, and their form allows the original scale and form of the buildings to still be understood. The proposed extensions, however, would be extremely large, monolithic blocks rising to three and four stories in height with little to no architectural expression, which would eradicate any sense of scale or articulation which exists. The harsh appearance would be exacerbated by the straight, featureless elevation to the rear of the 'mansard' floor to the main buildings. The extensions would be completely at odds with the scale of development at the rear of the terrace, which is limited to traditional closet wings and single storey, domestic scale extensions. Whilst I accept that the extensions stand to the rear, they are not hidden from public view and their overwhelming scale and incongruous form would be readily visible from the rear access road, rear windows of neighbouring properties and from the platforms of the train station immediately to the rear of the site.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed extensions would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, there would be conflict with Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 (March 2018) (the Local Plan), which seeks high quality design in all development which respects and has regard to the local character of the area, in terms of layout, form, style, massing, scale, density, orientation, materials, and design. There would also be conflict with the similar aims of Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (March 2016).

Living Conditions

8. The other properties in the terrace are stated to include a ground floor commercial use and upper floor flat to No 27 next door, a dwelling at No 29, and further offices at Nos 31 and 33, at the rear of the latter is a further flat. Residential uses are also indicated to exist to upper floors of No 19.
9. The proposal would see the hotel increase in size to 60 rooms compared to 38 rooms at present, although the Council indicates planning permission exists only for 28 rooms. Either way, such an increase would add to the level of activity within and around the building. However, in the context of an established hotel operation and the proximity to Ilford town centre and the railway station, a certain level of noise and activity is already to be expected. I have no evidence to suggest the hotel attracts complaints due to noise or disturbance, or that the hotel would operate in a significantly different manner at 60 rooms compared to 38. Therefore, on the evidence before me, I find that the proposal would not lead to significant increases in noise or disturbance to neighbouring occupants.
10. I was able to observe the rear gardens of No 27 and 29 from within one of the hotel rooms, and saw that the existing rear extensions form a dominant wall to the side of No 27 which has an overbearing effect on neighbouring properties,

albeit the two storey height allows sunlight to reach the rear elevation of No 27 in the early part of the day. Whilst this garden is not used for residential purposes, the garden of No 29 is. The addition of two further full depth storeys to the rear of the property would create an even more dominant and imposing structure on the boundary of the site, which would severely enclose the rear windows and gardens at Nos 27 and 29, significantly reducing sunlight to these properties and harming outlook for their occupants.

11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would significantly harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, contrary to Policies LP13, LP24 and LP26 of the Local Plan, and Policy 7.15 of the LP, which together support development, and specifically hotel facilities, where the residential amenities of local residents will not be unduly affected through noise, disturbance, loss of light outlook or privacy.

Other Matters

12. The Council did not identify harm in respect of the effect of the proposal on the railway network, highway safety or waste disposal, subject to recommended conditions. On the evidence before me, I have no reasons to conclude otherwise in these matters; however, an absence of harm means these are neutral considerations in the planning balance.
13. The appellant refers two appeal decisions to me; however, these relate to proposals of different nature, scale and site circumstances. Consequently, I do not regard these as comparable to the scheme before me, which I have assessed on its own merits.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. I recognise that there is support in the Local Plan, the current and draft London Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework for the development of tourism accommodation, and the proposal would assist in meeting this aim. However, the addition of 22 rooms would be modest in the context of the Borough as a whole, and the social and economic benefits flowing from this would attract limited weight in favour of the proposal.
15. Set against these benefits, there would be significant social and environmental harm arising from the loss of the adverse effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. Consequently, the proposal would not achieve the three objectives of sustainable development set out in the Framework.
16. In my judgement, the benefits of the proposal, taken together, would not amount to material considerations which would outweigh the identified conflicts with the development plan, to which I afford significant weight, and would not justify a decision being made other than in accordance with the development plan, taken as a whole.
17. For these reasons, the appeal is dismissed.

K Savage

INSPECTOR