



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 January 2022

by Stuart Willis BA Hons MSc PGCE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/21/3278043

27 Lowfield Road, Acton, London W3 0AZ

- 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 & Mrs Anthony Russell against the decision of London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 212798FUL, dated 1 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is subdivision of single dwelling house into two dwelling houses; associated private amenity spaces (following demolition of outbuilding in rear garden); alterations to roof involving hip-to-gable enlargement to side roof slope and extension to rear of main roof slope, and installation of four rooflights to front roof slope; retain one number front porch; alterations to front and rear elevations involving replacing window and door openings, and alterations to forecourt involving retention of a vehicle crossover, breaks in boundary treatment, and installation of plantings and including provision of two number bicycle stations and refuse enclosures.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the application form. Although different to that given on the decision notice and appeal form, no confirmation that a change was agreed has been provided.

Main Issues

3. The main issues of the appeal are:
 - Whether the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to internal living space; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Living Conditions

4. Policy D6 of the London Plan and Policy 3.5 of the DPD¹ sets out minimum size requirements for Gross Internal (floor) Area (GIA) and adequately sized rooms. These reflect those in the THS².

¹ Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document

² Technical Housing Standards-Nationally Described Space Standard

5. While it is stated that the smallest bedroom in each unit would be used as a single bedroom, the plans show all bedrooms with double beds. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect them to be used as such. Although one is only marginally so, a total of 3 bedrooms across the 2 properties would fall below the 11.5sqm floor area the above policies and guidance require as a minimum for a double bedroom.
6. Both proposed units would have 4 bedrooms. In the absence of compelling evidence that they would include single bedrooms, I have considered them as 8 person properties. Consequently, both properties would fall below the 124sqm minimum GIA for such units.
7. In light of the above, while the aim may have been to make efficient use of space, the proposed development would not provide appropriate internal space for future occupiers. It has been suggested that conditions could be imposed to alter the layout of the first floor to address the shortfall in space. However, no amended plans showing such a change have been put before me and I cannot be sure what alterations would be involved.
8. It would fail to accord with the aims of Policies 3.5, 7B and 7D of the DPD and Policy D6 of the London Plan to provide sufficient internal space. The scheme would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) where it seeks to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Character and Appearance

9. Lowfield Road is characterised by single storey properties of a similar height, set back from the road. Many of the blocks of built form in the street have similar front elevations with projecting gables.
10. Nonetheless, I saw that several dwellings have been altered and extended. This includes at roof level where it was apparent that properties have been altered to provide first floor accommodation. Moreover, front elevations were not uniform, even within the same block, with projections sometimes being different sizes and porches of different appearance having been added. As a result, there is no consistency to the streetscene.
11. Therefore, while there are some similarities to the position and height of the built form, there is variation in the appearance of the properties.
12. The proposed alterations would add bulk to the roof and alter its shape. Nevertheless, I saw a number of properties that had gable ends, including where it related to only one end of a block or pair. Furthermore, although not replicas of the proposed scheme or all on the same side of the street, there are flat roof elements to the rear part of dwellings in Lowfield Road that are clearly visible from the street.
13. Given the alterations that have taken place in the street, there is irregular spacing between properties. The proposal would result in the building being set in further from the side boundary than at present. Moreover, the existing roof height, that matches the adjacent property, would be retained. Consequently, the scale and mass of the property would not be discordant.
14. While wraparound flat roof elements are present at both, the pair of properties the appeal site forms part of are not identical. There were also instances of 3

properties within a single block, with 3 entrances. As such, the presence of an additional front door and that the appeal property would not match that of the attached one would not be unique or draw the eye.

15. Therefore, the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would comply with the design and character protection aims of Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan, 7.4 and 7B of the DPD and Supplementary Planning Document 4 - Residential Extensions. It would also accord with the Framework where it seeks to ensure schemes are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

16. The proposal would align with the Framework where it seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing and acknowledges that small-scale developments can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement and be built out quickly. In addition, there is policy support for the efficient use of land and the site is in a location accessible to services and facilities.
17. Notwithstanding this, being for a single additional dwelling, the contribution towards housing supply, along with economic and social benefits from the construction and occupation of the development would be small.
18. There is limited information provided with regard to issues renting the existing property and the benefits to the appellant's family from the proposal. Therefore, I give these limited weight. From the evidence before me, the other schemes in the area highlighted are for developments of a far greater scale and are therefore not directly comparable to this proposal.
19. I appreciate the appellant has amended the scheme seeking to overcome concerns raised in a previous application. Nonetheless, I have found the scheme before me to be unacceptable.

Conclusion

20. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweighs the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.
21. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Stuart Willis

INSPECTOR