



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2022

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/22/3299016
125D Northcote Road, London SW11 6PS

- 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 Languard Investments against the decision of London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref: 2021/4413 dated 23 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is for alterations including erection of rear extension and formation of roof terrace with glazed safety surround above two storey back addition and rear roof extension in connection with creation of additional 1- bedroom and 2- bedroom flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. I have taken the description from the decision notice and appeal form which more concisely and accurately describes the development rather than the application form which was lengthier and included additional descriptive elements.
3. The site address is that on the application form, however, the appeal site also incorporates 62a and 62b Belleville Road which are part of the building.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the setting of the Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a corner building wrapping around Belleville Road and Northcote Road with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential above. The commercial units are served from Northcote Road however, the prominent form and appearance of the building is that of the residential properties in Belleville Road and it presents a flank elevation to Northcote Road.
6. Extending across both sides of Northcote Road the two storey properties in Belleville Road have a consistency in appearance and follow the gradient, stepping down towards Northcote Road. I agree with the Council's Conservation

and Urban Design officer's comments that the buildings to the four corners of the junction of Northcote Road and Belleville Road form an attractive homogenous ensemble and are part of a break in scale and height to the buildings along Northcote Road. The introduction of a three-storey form to the appeal site would in my opinion disrupt this cohesion and would be visually intrusive to the rhythm of Belleville Road.

7. The design and materials of the proposed three-storey development relates to the adjoining building, No.125b-125c Northcote Road, where the second floor is a relatively recent addition¹ and continues the scale and form of the rest of the terrace. The appeal property however has a different relationship, and the proposal would effectively reorientate the building towards Northcote Road and significantly change its form and appearance.
8. I acknowledge, as highlighted by the appellant that Wandsworth Local Plan Core Strategy March 2016 (CS) identifies Northcote Road as a special part of the town centre, a focus for small businesses with an active and vibrant street scene. Nonetheless, its function as a community hub does not place any significance on the buildings in terms of their visual or townscape importance. The appeal site is in a transitional position and its surroundings include Belleville Road to which it has an historical and architectural connection.
9. The area of Belleville Road and Wakehurst Road to the other side of Northcote Road lie within the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area (WCCA). Part of its significance is derived from the grid street pattern and whilst the appeal site lies outside the WCCA, it is adjacent and in my view the alterations to the junction would be harmful to the setting through what would be fundamental alterations to the scale and emphasis of the corner and the townscape composition.
10. Overall, I find that the development whilst making more efficient use of the site fails to have regard to the existing building and the prevailing pattern of development. The scale and form of the development would not positively integrate with its surroundings, to the detriment of the local distinctiveness. The proposal would therefore be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would not preserve the setting of the WCCA.
11. Having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the harm to the setting of the WCCA would be less than substantial. Even so, paragraph 199 of the Framework directs me to give 'great weight' to the conservation of such assets. The Framework further advises that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would provide benefits of additional housing units and upgrade the existing accommodation which would have both social and economic benefits. However, the weight I attach to this is limited due to the scale of development and the modest contribution it would make. Given the absence of any significant public benefit the proposal would not outweigh the identified harm.
12. Thus, the development would conflict with Development Management Policies Document policies DMS1 and DMH5 and CS policy IS3 which promote a high level of integration with the surroundings, seek to ensure that the scale, massing, and appearance provides a high-quality design, and that the layout contributes positively to local spatial character. Additionally, the policies seek

¹ Council Planning Reference 2018/0881

to protect and reinforce the existing varied character and heritage of the borough and to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of heritage assets and the surrounding historic environment.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons sets out and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR