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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2023

**by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/22/3301990**

**26 Dover Park Drive, Wandsworth, London SW15 5BG**

- 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 Laird Ward against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
  - The application Ref 2022/1249, dated 25 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2022.
  - The development proposed is Demolition of existing side wing and replacement with new single storey side-wing plus mansard roof, in conjunction with the full internal refurbishment of the existing property.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Westmead Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

## Reasons

3. The appeal property is a large, detached residential dwelling set within spacious grounds on the western side of Dover Park Drive. There is an existing low slung single storey flat roofed side wing to the northern elevation.
4. This would be demolished to make way for a new side wing. The new side wing would differ amongst other respects in that it would include a mansard roof to enable accommodation to be accommodated in the side wing at first floor level. The wing would therefore have a significantly increased height when compared to that existing.
5. The site sits within The Willet Estate Character Area. This part of Dover Park Drive, especially to the western side has a spacious feel. The Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy<sup>1</sup> (CAAMS) at P.25 identifies 'generous spaces between each of the individual houses and these gaps allow views from the street into the often verdant gardens and sky beyond'.
6. There is then reference to spaces between houses which make an important contribution to both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The appeal property is not included within this list or the Townscape Map on

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<sup>1</sup> Westmead Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy, 2010 Wandsworth Conservation & Design Group.

- P.15 of the CAAMS which amongst other things identifies spaces which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Nonetheless, the spacious setting of the properties is one of the defining features of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
7. The front boundary treatment at the appeal property which is of limited height allows clear and direct views of the property and side wing from Dover Park Drive.
  8. As is the case with the gap between 14 Parkmead to the north and 24 Dover Park Drive and the appeal site, clear views are available across the existing wing to the sky to the west and established trees. In this manner, views over the existing side wing at the appeal property do make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
  9. I appreciate that there is already a side wing in place that extends close to the northern boundary and that we are not considering a gap between individual houses in the sense as described in the CAAMS.
  10. However, the increase in height of the new side wing to the side of the property compared to that existing (or that consented under planning permission reference 2021/3617) would be notable. It would reduce views of the sky above the existing wing and also partially obscure views from the street towards mature trees located to the west.
  11. Whilst I do not consider that the design which would be subordinate would detract from the appearance of the host building, the proposal would subsequently detract from the heritage significance of the Conservation Area which in part lies with the spacious setting of the properties.
  12. The harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial. Paragraph 202 of the Framework<sup>2</sup> requires such harm to be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.
  13. The public benefits of the proposal are likely to be limited to enlarged and improved accommodation at the dwelling. These public benefits would however be very narrow in scope and restricted largely to the occupants of the dwelling only.
  14. Given the degree of harm I have found that would arise from the appeal scheme and the statutory protection afforded to Conservation Areas, such benefits are not sufficient to outweigh this harm.
  15. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy IS 3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Core Strategy (2016) and policies DMS 1, DMS 2 and DMH 5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (2016). Amongst other things, these policies seek development which contributes positively to local spatial character and which protects heritage assets.
  16. I accept that the design of the extension meets some of the criteria identified within the guidance of the housing SPD<sup>3</sup> relating to extensions. However, it is clear that the SPD alludes to the importance of protecting Conservation Areas. There is therefore some conflict with the SPD.

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<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Wandsworth Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document – Housing – November 2016.

### **Other Matters**

17. My attention has been drawn to what are identified as other side extensions within the area. I was able to view those identified nearby on Westmead, however the character of this street was more enclosed than this part of Dover Park Drive therefore its comparability is limited. The scale of the identified extension at 28 Dover Park Drive appears to be lesser and does not therefore provide justification for the appeal scheme. I therefore afford these matters limited weight.

### **Conclusion**

18. There is nothing to indicate that the decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan and I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*T J Burnham*

INSPECTOR