



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2023

by K Lancaster BA (hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/22/3308946

Northern Star House, 130 and 132 High Road, London N11 1PG

- 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 Andrew Charalambous on behalf of Woodland Estates Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 22/02313/FUL, dated 16 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as "two new residential apartments to the rear of the existing building, one new single person apartment set within the existing building recess at first floor level and one new one bedroom two person apartment at second floor, all built within the existing building ground floor footprint."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - Whether the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to internal access arrangements, provision of internal accommodation, external amenity space, daylight and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is a former public house which has been converted to provide 9 residential apartments, which are a mix of one bedroom and two-bedroom units. The existing building is three storeys in height, with rooms in the roof space.
4. The rear elevation is of a simple, functional form, mostly flat with flat roofed elements and is of limited architectural interest. The rear elevation of the building is visible from Springfield Road and the public open space opposite. I observed a variety of architectural styles within the local area.
5. The existing building has already been significantly altered and extended, these alterations are at odds with the pitched roof design of the original building and neighbouring properties. Whilst I acknowledge that there is an opportunity to

improve the appearance of the building, the introduction of hipped and gabled elements to the rear elevation would result in an awkward juxtaposition with the prominent flat roof stairwell, and other flat roofed elements of the building. Therefore, failing to respond positively to the host building.

6. The proposed extension would be three-storey in height, creating two self-contained 1-bedroom apartments, together with alterations to provide additional accommodation to an existing self-contained unit. The extension would be set below the ridge line of the original building and whilst this would be broadly in keeping with neighbouring buildings, in the context of the existing extensions to the building, these further additions would result in an overly dominant form of development that detracts from the simpler character and appearance of this elevation. The juxtaposition of the different roof designs would fail to achieve a high-quality design that has special regard to their context.
7. By virtue of its appearance, scale and massing, the proposal would result in a discordant addition to the host property which would detract from the character and appearance of the area. This incongruous appearance would be widely appreciated from Springfield Road and the area of public open space which is opposite to the site.
8. Consequently, the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and area. This would conflict with Policies GG2, D3, D4, and D8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy CP30 of the Enfield Core Strategy (2010) (CS) and Policies DMD6, DMD8 and DMD37 of the Enfield Development Management Document (2014) (DMD) which requires all new development to be high quality and design led, having special regard to their context and be of an appropriate scale, bulk and massing.
9. The proposal would also conflict with Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks to promote high-quality design which adds to the overall quality of the area.

Living Conditions – Future Occupiers

10. Policy DMD8 of the DMD requires new residential development to meet or exceed the minimum space standards in the London Plan and London Housing Design Guide. Policy D6 of the London Plan requires a minimum of 50m² of Gross Internal Area (GIA) to be provided for a 1 bedroom, 2-person dwelling. Whilst the second floor flat would exceed this requirement, the floor flat would fail to meet this standard. As such, this flat would fail to provide adequate internal space for future occupiers contrary to Policy DMD8 of the DMD and Policy H6 of the London Plan.
11. Each of the proposed flats would be primarily single aspect, with just an additional small window provided in the corner of the kitchen areas. These secondary windows would overlook a small area of amenity space located internally within the building. The position and orientation of the building means that access to daylight would be more limited and the height and proximity of neighbouring buildings would also limit the outlook from these windows.
12. Whilst I note that the appellant would be willing to consider providing additional windows, I have no details before me to consider. On this basis, I

conclude that the proposal by virtue of being single aspect it would fail to provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers with particular regard to daylight and outlook.

13. I note that an area of external amenity space would be provided to the occupiers of the extended flat. However, in respect of the new flats, the plans indicate that there would be no outdoor private amenity space to be provided. Instead, each flat would have a 'sunroom.' These areas would be mostly enclosed and therefore would not provide an adequate level external amenity space as required by Policy DMD9 of the DMD and Policy D6 of the London Plan, which both require a minimum of 5m² to be provided.
14. The access to the new flats would be via an existing communal access to the rear of the building, utilising the communal stair well to access the flats via a smoke lobby. The Council considers this would create a convoluted access arrangement, but I have been provided with no substantive evidence to substantiate this claim. The access arrangements are the same as those for a number of existing flats within the building, and the addition of the smoke lobbies is a requirement of Building Regulations. Accordingly, I find that the access arrangements would not result in unduly harmful living conditions for future occupiers.
15. I therefore conclude that whilst the proposed development would provide suitable access arrangements, the proposed development would fail to provide adequate provision of internal accommodation, external amenity space, daylight and outlook. Consequently, the proposed development would fail to provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers of the development. This would be contrary to Policies D4 and D6 of the London Plan, Policies CP4 and CP30 of the CS and Policies DMD6, DMD8, DMD9 and DMD37 of the DMD. These policies seek, amongst other things, to ensure the provision of adequately sized rooms, with access to private external amenity space, daylight and outlook. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance contained within the London Plan Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Other Matters

16. The site is located in a sustainable location, close to public transport and services. There is no dispute between the parties that the principle of development is acceptable in this location and that the proposal would increase the density of an existing site, making a small contribution to housing supply in the Borough. I have also had regard to the absence of harm to neighbouring occupiers. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified in respect of the character and appearance of the area and the adequacy of the living conditions of future occupiers of the development.

Conclusion

17. For these reasons, and having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Lancaster

INSPECTOR