



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/W5780/W/22/3312474

Cranbrook Hotel, 22-24 Coventry Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 4QR

- 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 Cranbrook Hotel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2415-22, dated 15 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as the “proposed demolition of the existing detached single storey structure and redevelopment of site to provide hotel annexe accommodation in connection with existing adjacent hotel.”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

- The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
- The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is largely occupied by an existing single storey building which fronts onto Granville Road. The building is currently in use as a laundrette and hotel accommodation associated with the Cranbrook Hotel. The hotel has its primary frontage onto Coventry Road but is a corner property situated at the junction with Granville Road. The existing hotel has been extended and altered, including the provision of a three-storey annexe building to the rear, which also fronts onto Granville Road.
4. Nos 11 and 11A Granville Road which adjoins the boundary of the appeal premises, has the appearance of a two-storey, semi-detached property, albeit I understand that it has been subdivided internally. The character of Granville Road is mixed, adjacent to the appeal site is a row of semi-detached houses, which exhibit a strong sense of architectural rhythm and uniformity. There is more recent development opposite the site, which takes a more modern design approach, but is broadly in keeping with the surrounding character.

5. The appeal site occupies a narrow road frontage between No 11 and 11A and the three-storey annexe building. The proposal would replicate the footprint of the existing building, which is set forward of the neighbouring properties on Granville Road, but slightly back from the annexe building. Whilst I acknowledge that it is not unusual to have a mixture of roof heights, there is a clear change in building hierarchy on Granville Road, in comparison to the larger scale of properties on Coventry Road. The proposal fails to acknowledge this change in character and would therefore result in an awkward relationship between the proposal, the existing annexe, and its surroundings. The roof line and pitch of the proposal would not respect the character of the neighbouring properties and would appear incongruous in the street scene.
6. The introduction of a detached, narrow, tall building, which extends most of the width of the site would result in a visually cramped form of development. This would fail to reflect the change in character experienced on this side of Granville Road, which is of a more modest residential character. Furthermore, its height and bulk, would result in a top-heavy development which would not reflect the scale or character of the adjacent properties.
7. Although the proposed building would incorporate similar design features and be constructed of similar materials to that of the adjoining annexe building, these features are not typically found elsewhere on this part of Granville Road and the design would not provide an appropriate design solution in the context of the surrounding development.
8. Accordingly, by virtue of its siting, scale, design, and massing, the demolition of the existing detached single storey structure and redevelopment of the site to provide hotel annexe accommodation would result in unacceptable harm to the character and the appearance of the area. This is contrary to Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018) (RLP) which, amongst other things, requires new development to be of high-quality design that takes available opportunities to improve an area's character and quality, and the way it functions. The Policy also sets out that the development should also respect the local character of the area and make a positive architectural and urban design contribution to its context and location.
9. The appeal proposal would also be contrary to Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) and Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seek to ensure design is high-quality and is sympathetic to local character.

Living Conditions

10. Next to the appeal site is 11 and 11A Granville Road. The evidence before me is that the property was been subdivided into flats and is now used as an annex for the hotel. Nevertheless, I have no evidence before me that the accommodation could not be occupied as dwellinghouses in the future. As such, I have had regard to the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the future occupiers of this property, and in particular the effect on the two windows in the front elevation which serve habitable rooms
11. The construction of a three-storey building in such close proximity to No 11 and 11A, and projecting forward of the building would result in an overbearing and dominant form of development. Although of a similar footprint to the existing building, the increased height of the building would lead to some reduction in

light to these windows. As these rooms are single aspect, these effects overall would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the living conditions of the occupiers.

12. There are no windows overlooking No 11 and 11A proposed in the appeal scheme, which means that the proposal will not cause harm by virtue of overlooking or loss of privacy. However, the absence of harm in these respects are neutral favours which neither weigh for or against the proposal.
13. The annexe building has windows serving the existing hotel accommodation which would face directly onto the appeal site. The proposal would be located in very close proximity to these windows, and would result in a reduction in daylight, sunlight and outlook to these rooms. The Council's reason for refusal states that this would result in a poor form of hotel accommodation.
14. As the accommodation within the existing building is used for hotel guests, the expectations of those staying in the hotel would be different from those living in permanent accommodation.
15. Whilst I acknowledge that a reduction in daylight and outlook to the existing hotel accommodation could be avoided if the development is not permitted. I have not been directed to any specific policy or guidance which provides minimum standards for hotel accommodation in relation to daylight, sunlight, and outlook. Policy LP26 of the RLP promotes high-quality design which does not result in an adverse impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and provides high standards of accommodation for housing. However, Policy LP26 is silent on standards for hotel accommodation. In the absence of any specific policy requirement or guidance, I therefore conclude that the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of hotel accommodation and that there would be no adverse harm to the existing hotel accommodation.
16. Accordingly, by virtue of its siting and scale the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 11 and 11A. This is contrary to Policy LP26 of the RLP, which amongst other things, seeks to ensure development will not result in an adverse impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers including daylight/sunlight and outlook.

Other Matters

17. My attention has been drawn to Paragraph 11 of the Framework and to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The appeal site is in close proximity to the commercial centre of Ilford where commercial and economic growth is promoted in the Ilford Manifesto.
18. My attention has also been drawn to Policy E10 of the London Plan which relates to the provision of hotel accommodation and to the economic benefits of the proposal. The proposal is supported in principle and would make a small contribution to the supply of hotel accommodation
19. However, these are modest benefits which do not outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area, nor to the living conditions of the future occupiers of No 11 and 11A.

Conclusion

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

K Lancaster

INSPECTOR