
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2024

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/T5150/D/24/3336803
66 Wrotesley Road, London NW10 5YE

- 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 Henrietta Flood against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Brent.
 - The application Ref 23/1661, dated 10 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a rear ground floor infill extension with lantern roof light.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The appellant has submitted an additional drawing¹ at the appeal stage, which shows a lantern roof light in the proposed rear elevation. The original plan² omits this detail. As the extra drawing corrects a discrepancy, with no change sought to the proposal, I am satisfied that no injustice would be caused if I were to consider it. Accordingly, I shall deal with the appeal on the basis of the plans provided at both the application and appeal stages.
3. The reasons for refusal refer to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 2: Residential Extensions Design Guide (2018). I have assumed this reference is in error because the extracts before me are from a document entitled Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD2 (SPD2).

Main issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development firstly, on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area; and secondly, on the living conditions of the occupiers of 68 Wrotesley Road with particular regard to sense of enclosure.

Reasons

5. The proposal is primarily to erect a ground floor extension at the back of the appeal property, which is a semi-detached house of traditional style within a predominantly residential area. The new addition would replace an existing canopy structure, which provides a partly enclosed courtyard, and a single

¹ Drawing number 0006 Rev C

² Drawing number 0006 Rev 00

storey rear projection that has brick walls and a flat roof. The site is not within a conservation area nor is No 66 a listed building.

6. The proposed extension would not extend beyond the rear of the existing buildings to be replaced and a good-sized garden would remain with the new built form in place. The external materials to be used would also match those of the existing dwelling, which is a matter that could be covered by a condition.
7. Nevertheless, the proposal would be a sizeable addition. It would result in a ground floor rear extension that stretches across the entire width of the host building. According to the Council, it would also project outwards from the main rear wall by about 4.8-metres. That the proposal would have a flat roof with overhanging fascias, and a line of full-length glazed panels would visually accentuate its considerable width and bulk. From the back garden of No 66, which slopes downwards from the main house, the completed extension would appear as an overly large 'box-like' addition. The main outcome would be significant harm to the appearance of the appeal dwelling because its rear elevation would be visually dominated by the proposal. As a result, the intrinsic character of the host building would be spoilt.
8. The new rear extension would not be visible from the road given its position at the back of the host building. It would, however, be evident from the back garden of the attached property, which is 68 Wrotesley Road, from which it would draw the eye as an uncharacteristically large and unwelcome addition to the local area.
9. I agree that the existing canopy structure and extension establish a significant built form beyond the main rear wall of No 66 and adjacent to No 68. Taken together, these existing buildings cover a similar footprint to the appeal scheme. However, the solid form of construction of the new extension and its unbroken rear wall would noticeably contrast with the more 'lightweight' appearance of the canopy structure to be replaced, with its Perspex like upper side wall and roof, and its partly open frontage to the garden. Consequently, the completed extension would appear far more substantial than the existing buildings to be replaced.
10. SPD2 states that the maximum depth of single storey rear extensions to attached houses, including semi-detached properties, is normally 3-metres from the original wall. It also advises that the height of a flat roof extension on the site's boundary should not exceed 3-metres. Based on the information provided by the Council, the proposal would comfortably exceed both thresholds. SPD2 also notes that rear extensions should be designed to respect the character and size of the house. For the reasons given, the proposal would not adhere to these design principles.
11. On the first main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. Accordingly, it conflicts with Policy DMP1 of the Brent Local Plan 2019-2041 (LP) and the advice within SPD2. These policies and guidance aim to ensure that development is of a scale, layout and siting that provides high levels of amenity and that complements the locality.

Living conditions

12. The new flank wall would be up to and along part of the site's shared boundary with No 68. As a result, the patio and part of the garden of this attached property would be partly enclosed by the new extension. In views from these vantage points, and the rear windows of No 68, the proposal would be evident particularly as it would occupy an elevated position relative to the site due to a difference in ground levels.
13. There is already a brick wall in place along the common boundary between Nos 66 and 68. Whilst the new flank wall would be taller and more substantial than its existing counterpart, I attach some weight to the presence of a permanent and solid feature alongside the rear of No 68. From what I saw, the main direction of outlook from the rear windows and patio of No 68 would continue to be across the back garden of this adjacent property. While the proposal would be close to the back of this neighbouring property, on balance, neither its height nor depth would be so great as to unduly heighten a sense of enclosure for the occupiers of No 68.
14. Therefore, I conclude on the second main issue that the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 68. As such, it does not conflict with LP Policy DMP1 and SPD2 insofar as they aim to safeguard residential amenity. My finding on this issue does not outweigh the harm that I have identified in relation to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Other matters

15. The proposal includes several additional elements including new ground floor side windows, a lowered ground floor to the existing dining room, a new wood burner chimney, removal of the existing chimneystack and alterations to the rear garden terrace. From my inspection of the plans, these parts of the development are not severable from the ground floor rear extension, which is objectionable. Therefore, I have not considered further the opportunity to issue a split decision, in which planning permission might be granted for certain elements of the appeal scheme.
16. An interested party raises additional concerns including the effect of the proposal on light, privacy, and the potential for structural damage, noise, and general disturbance during the construction phase. These are important matters and I have considered all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the first main issue, these considerations have not been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

17. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan. There are no material considerations, including those of the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR