



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2024

by F Wilkinson BSc (Hons), MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/24/3341034

346 Battersea Park Road, Wandsworth, London SW11 3BY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr M Kaye of Martenbrook Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application reference is 2023/4836.
 - The development proposed is alterations including erection of an additional floor of accommodation to form two x two-bedroom flats and installation of a new lift shaft and ventilation flue. Installation of cycle and waste storage at rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and area; and
 - whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers with regard to external amenity space.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal building is a three-storey property with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential accommodation on the first and second floors. It is part of a short terrace. There is variety in the age, architectural form, and height of buildings in the surrounding area, including those within the terrace in which the appeal building sits.
4. The proposal to add an additional floor would not significantly increase the overall height of the building. Furthermore, the height of the resulting building would be similar to those nearby. Given the diversity in the built form, and being mindful of the support to upward extensions in the 2023 National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), an additional storey need not be unacceptable. The Framework also gives support to mansard roof extensions on suitable properties. The proposed roof extension has some of the characteristics of a mansard roof. Given the mix of roof forms in the area, including a number of buildings with mansard-style roofs, this type of addition would not necessarily be incongruous.

5. However, the support in the Framework is caveated in terms of the development being well designed, including complying with any local design policies and standards, and in the case of mansard roofs that their external appearance harmonises with the original building. Amongst other matters, Policies LP1, LP5 and LP7 of the 2023 adopted Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 (the Local Plan) and Policies D3 and D4 of the 2021 London Plan seek to ensure that the scale, massing, and appearance of development enhances and relates positively to local character; does not harm the character and appearance of the area; respects or complements the host building; and positively responds to local distinctiveness.
6. I appreciate that amendments to the design of the roof addition have been made following the previous appeal decision¹. This includes a change in external material from metal cladding to slate roofing tiles, sloped front and rear elevations and a setback from the edge of the building by around 0.4 metres.
7. Nonetheless, the roof as now proposed, although sloping, would have a steep pitch, giving a verticality to it. This together with its height upwards from the eaves level would result in a bulky addition to the building that would detract from its scale and proportions. Additionally, unlike other nearby buildings with mansard-style roofs, the proposal would not include features that would soften or reduce the impact of the proposed arrangement. For example, there would be no parapet, a feature specifically referenced in the Framework's glossary when defining the circumstances in which a mansard roof may be a suitable type of roof extension. There would be only a limited setback, which would not be readily apparent in views of the building.
8. The overall effect of the proposed roof addition would be to create a conspicuously bulky building that would be visible for some distance along Battersea Park Road. Consequently, it would appear as a discordant feature. I do not therefore find the support in the Framework to upward extensions generally and those achieved through mansard roofs as providing justification for what would be a harmful design response.
9. The fenestration proposed in the roof addition would be consistent with the positioning and scale of the windows in the existing residential accommodation, which would help to maintain a balance to the built form of the host building. However, this would not adequately overcome the overall result of the proposed roof form which would be of a scale and massing that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and area.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and area. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policies LP1, LP5 and LP7 of the Local Plan, Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan and the Framework, as summarised above. There would also be conflict with the guidance in the 2016 Wandsworth Housing Supplementary Planning Document relating to roof alterations.

Living Conditions

11. While Policy D6 of the London Plan sets out requirements for minimum sizes of private outdoor space, which the development would exceed, these would

¹ Appeal reference APP/H5960/W/23/3318474

apply where there are no higher local standards in the Borough's development plan documents. Policy LP27 of the Local Plan requires all new residential development to provide private outdoor space to a minimum of 10 square metres (sqm) for one- and two-bedroom dwellings. The outdoor amenity space proposed for each flat is 8sqm.

12. However, the configuration of the proposed balconies would offer useable outdoor spaces for the private enjoyment of future occupiers. Furthermore, both proposed flats would provide additional internal living space over and above the minimum gross internal floor area set out in the 2015 Nationally Described Space Standard which Policy LP27 requires compliance with. Future occupiers would also have access to several areas of public open space within a reasonable walking distance. I am also mindful that the balconies have been designed in acknowledgement of the existing building features, which would help to maintain an underlying balance to the host building.
13. As such, in this particular case, I conclude that the harm to the living conditions of future occupiers arising from what in my judgement is a relatively modest shortfall in the size of outdoor amenity space, and the resulting conflict with Policy LP27 of the Local Plan, would be limited.

Other Matters

14. The proposal would contribute two dwellings to the supply of housing on an existing site in a location within a reasonable walking distance of a range of services and facilities and that is well served by public transport. In this regard, it would accord with objectives of the Framework and the London Plan, including significantly boosting the supply of homes and the recognition given to the contribution of small sites in meeting housing requirements. There would also be social and economic benefits such as construction employment and additional residents supporting local services and facilities. These considerations weigh positively for the proposal, although I do not afford them very significant weight given the quantum of houses proposed. These matters would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
15. The significance of the nearby Grade II listed Citizens of Battersea War Memorial Shelter is in part derived from its historic interest in commemorating the impact of the Second World War on the local community and from it being a place of quiet reflection and remembrance. Given the nature of the development and separation distance, the proposal would not visually intrude into the setting of the listed building, its important commemorative and community role would not be eroded and the atmosphere in which it is experienced would not be diminished. Consequently, the setting of the listed building would be preserved.

Conclusion

16. The proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight that would indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Wilkinson

INSPECTOR