



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3352964

9 St Johns Hill Grove, Wandsworth, London, SW11 2RF

- 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 & Mrs Nicholas & Julia Griffin against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/1042.
 - The development proposed is extension of second floor rear room to match the first and ground floor footprint, new windows upgraded with enhanced U values to comply with current Building Regulations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr & Mrs Nicholas & Julia Griffin against the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth and this is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matter

3. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised in December 2024. As the changes do not materially affect the main issues in this case, the parties have not been invited to make further comments. Where reference is made to the Framework in this decision, the paragraph numbers are those that appear in the latest version.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and on the St Johns Hill Grove Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is an end of terraced property within St Johns Hill Grove Conservation Area (CA). The St Johns Hill Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAA) identifies that the area derives its significance from its variety of early to late Victorian buildings including villas, terraces, shops, a church and school. These buildings were built using materials and details typical of their period such as stock brick, stucco and render, slate roofs and sash windows. In St Johns Hill Grove properties are described as generally

- two storeys, either semi-detached or in short terraces, with small gardens. Whilst not statutorily or locally listed, the CAA identifies (amongst other properties) Nos 1-9 and Nos 11-23 as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Similar advice is contained within the Framework and in Policy LP3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 (2023) (WLP) and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 (LP).
 7. The original outrigger to the rear has been extended vertically. This extension is set back from the rear edge of the outrigger and is marginally set in from the sides. It is of a greater scale and bulk than the two storey outriggers on the adjacent properties and accordingly is a highly prominent feature that already dominates the rear elevation of the host dwelling and adjacent sections of the terraces on either side. It is also visible from St Johns Hill Grove, through the gap between the appeal property and 7 St Johns Grove.
 8. The appellant's heritage statement describes the existing extension as comprising poor architectural quality, due to the wrap around window, awkward junction with the main roof and its heavy parapet. However, whilst I do not dispute these observations, the existing extension does retain at least a degree of subserviency, due to its set back from the rear line of the original wing and the rear wrap-around glazed element.
 9. The proposed extension would be of a similar height to the existing extension to be replaced and would be constructed of matching materials. However, it would be flush with the side and rear walls of the original outrigger. In the absence of any meaningful set back or differentiation from the rear wall of the outrigger, it would appear as a high prominent feature which would unacceptably dominate the rear elevation of the dwelling and fail to respect its original scale and built form. The extension would be clearly visible from the gardens of neighbouring dwellings where it would be read as a bulky addition which would dominate the rear elevation of the dwelling and would detract from the architectural composition of the wider terrace. The blank, unrelieved flank wall of the extension would also be visible from St Johns Hill Grove, where its scale and lack of subserviency would be apparent and out of character with the street scene.
 10. The proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Given the relatively small scale of the proposal, the harm to the CA would be less than substantial harm. Paragraph 215 of the Framework indicates that in such circumstances the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.
 11. I acknowledge the benefits to the appellant in terms of improved space and helping to overcome concerns in relation to sustainability, water leakage and mould. The appellant has also highlighted benefits in terms of thermal improvement and its role in helping mitigate climate change through improving the roof detail / drainage and reducing the proportion of glazing. There may also be some minor benefit in terms of reducing the scope for overlooking due to the removal of the 'wrap-around' window. However, these matters would not

amount to public benefits of sufficient weight to outweigh the great weight that should be given to the asset's conservation. Furthermore, I have no evidence to suggest that without the proposed changes, the dwelling would not continue in its optimum viable use.

12. In addition to the conflict with national policy and legislation identified above, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies LP1, LP3 and LP5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 (2023) and Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021). Together these policies and guidance seek to protect the district's heritage assets and (amongst other matters) seek to ensure that extensions respect and/or complement the form, setting, period and detailing of the host building and would be subservient to it.

Other Matters

13. I observed on my site visit a limited number of examples of dominant vertical extensions to outriggers on the rear elevation of properties in Harbut Road. However, I do have any information before me as when these extensions were built or their planning status. I therefore place only limited weight on these examples.
14. I acknowledge that pre-application advice was sought in 2014 and that based on the information provided at that time, officers raised no specific objections to the proposal. However, whilst no doubt frustrating, pre-application advice is not binding on the Council. Furthermore, the advice was given on the basis of policies within the development plan that was adopted at that time and in accordance with an earlier version of the Framework. I do not therefore, afford significant weight to this consideration.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, having regard to the development plan and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR