



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 July 2025

by H Whitfield BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/25/3359637

2 Nevada Street, Greenwich SE10 9JL

- 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 Murat Demircan against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 24/3456/F.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of the dwelling (C3 Use) into 7 Bed 7 People HMO (Sui Generis) and erection of ground floor side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal property is located within the West Greenwich Conservation Area (WGCA) and the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site (WHS). In considering whether to grant planning permission, I have been mindful of my statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), which requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the WGCA. Furthermore, the WHS is a heritage asset of the highest significance, recognised internationally to be of outstanding universal value.
3. The appeal site is also situated within close proximity to listed buildings. In considering whether to grant planning permission, I have therefore also been mindful of my statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Act which requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the West Greenwich Conservation Area (WGCA);
 - whether the proposal would protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site (WHS); and
 - whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants with particular regard to internal space, light and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance including the Conservation Area

5. The appeal property is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling that is characteristic of the historic buildings within the surrounding area. The building is modest and has a large opening in the front elevation which provides access via an undercroft to the rear garden. A broadly central two-storey outrigger extends to the rear of the property and this feature is also reflected on the adjoining property, 1 Nevada Street (No 1).
6. The site is within a mixed-use area and Nevada Street contains various historical buildings some of which are listed and locally listed. However, the appeal building is neither. The site does, however, lie within the WGCA. The significance of the WGCA, insofar as is relevant to this appeal, derives from the architectural and historic value of the surrounding buildings, including the appeal property, and how their layout and form reflects the historic evolution of the area. The appeal building, along with No 1, is part of a relatively uniform group of historic buildings that have attractive architectural features and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the WGCA.
7. The two extensions either side of the mono-pitched element of the two-storey outrigger would cumulatively add considerable massing and bulk to the rear of the host dwelling, resulting in dominating additions that, with their uncharacteristic flat roofed form, would sit awkwardly with the rear outrigger. Whilst the adjacent boundary wall has a flat top, this is not comparable to the appearance of a flat roof extension which would contrast with the overall style of the host dwelling. Therefore, despite the use of matching materials and relatively modest height, the extensions would be visually dominant additions that would subsume the rear outrigger, and their cumulative width compared with the width of the rear outrigger, would exacerbate their incongruous and alien appearance. This would result in significant harm to the historic character and appearance of the host dwelling.
8. Views of these two extensions from public vantage points would be relatively limited owing to the high side boundary wall enclosing the site, the adjacent access gate and their positioning to the rear of the dwelling. However, views would be achievable from nearby properties within the WGCA including nearby University buildings. Such views would be of prominent and incongruous extensions that would consume the existing rear outrigger, unacceptably altering the form of the dwelling and adding significant bulk to this modest terraced property. Consequently, the development would harm the character and appearance of the WGCA, which would harm its significance.
9. The extension within the undercroft would be set within the existing footprint of the building and would not result in any changes to the front or side of the building. This extension would be relatively small scale, and the extent of external changes would be limited to the rear elevation. The proposed elevation plans do not show the rear elevation of this extension; however, the floor plans indicate that there would be one external window. Subject to appropriate window detailing and materials, which could be controlled via condition, this extension in isolation would not unacceptably harm the character or appearance of the dwelling or WGCA.
10. Furthermore, the Council has raised no concerns with the removal of the balcony or the fenestration alterations, which they conclude would preserve the existing character of the dwelling and I see no reason to come to a different conclusion on this matter. However, the absence of any harm resulting from these alterations and the extension

within the undercroft does not outweigh the harm I have identified in respect of the rear extensions to either side of the two-storey outrigger.

11. The appellant has referred to examples of extensions at 6, 7 and 8 Nevada Street and 1-5 and 2-6 William Walk. While they form part of the built context of the area, none are evidenced as comparable to the appeal scheme in terms of their planning considerations and, in any event, I have considered this proposal on its own merits. I also acknowledge that some nearby University buildings are modern in appearance and incorporate flat roofed elements. However, they are distinctly different in character and appearance to the modest and historic character of the appeal dwelling. Therefore, whilst they add to the varied character and appearance of the wider area, they are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme and the immediate context within which it would be read, and consequently do not alter my conclusions above.
12. For the above reasons, I therefore find that the proposal as a whole would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would fail to preserve the significance of the WGCA. The harm to the WGCA resulting from the development would be localised, and less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. The proposal would provide a 7-bedroomed HMO in a location with good access to services, facilities and public transport. As the site is close to a university it could provide accommodation for the student population which the appellant contends is much needed in the area. There would be some economic benefits associated with the construction phase and future occupiers would feed into the local economy. However, these moderate and limited public benefits would not outweigh the great weight to be attached to the conservation of heritage assets and the proposal would therefore conflict with the Framework.
14. The development would therefore fail to preserve the character or appearance of the WGCA, resulting in harm to its significance. It would also result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. This conflicts with the aims of Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) (the LP) and Policies DH1, DH3, DH(a) and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) (the RGLP). These policies collectively seek, amongst other things, high-quality developments that respond positively to local distinctiveness and character, are appropriate to the building and locality and conserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas by being sympathetic to their significance.

World heritage site

15. The Maritime Greenwich WHS includes the Old Royal Naval College, National Maritime Museum, the Royal Park and Greenwich Town Centre which are of significant architectural and historical importance. The Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS arises largely from the ensemble of the public and private buildings and their architectural and historic value, as well as the landscape design of the Royal Park, which collectively have a high degree of authenticity. The boundary of the WHS also encompasses town centre buildings that form the approach to the formal ensemble.
16. The appeal site is located in close proximity to the formal buildings of the WHS and surrounding parkland. Given the appeal building is part of a group of historic buildings

that have attractive architectural features and reflect the historic evolution of the area, it contributes positively to the WHS.

17. One of the main threats facing the WHS is from development pressures within the town that could adversely impact its urban grain and from tall buildings within its setting which may have the potential to adversely impact visual integrity. However, the proposal would not affect the urban grain of the area, nor would it adversely affect the visual integrity of the WHS given the development would be contained to the rear of the building and predominately at ground floor. I have found that the development would result in localised harm to the significance of the WGCA. However, given the development would be relatively modest and would not be highly visible in the context of the WHS, it would have a very limited effect on its Outstanding Universal Value and would not affect the ability to appreciate the authenticity, integrity, value and significance of its assets.
18. Consequently, the appeal scheme would protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. This accords with Policies HC1 and HC2 of the LP and Policies DH3 and DH4 of the RGLP insofar as they seek to, amongst other things, conserve and protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS and the conservation of such heritage assets.

Living conditions for future occupants

19. The appeal scheme proposes a 7-bedroom 7-person HMO. The Council's concerns relate to Bedroom 3 which is located on the ground floor within the proposed side extension under the existing undercroft. This bedroom would share a separate shower room and have access to an open plan kitchen/dining room.
20. Policy D6 of the LP requires housing developments to provide adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts which are fit for purpose and have sufficient daylight and sunlight that is appropriate for its context. The Royal Borough Greenwich Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (the SPD) states that to be considered good quality, proposals for conversion to an HMO will need to provide sufficient internal space and provide occupants with a reasonable standard of amenity. The SPD cites the Council's Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (the HMO Standards) and advises all applicants to refer directly to this. It confirms compliance with all applicable standards should be demonstrated as part of a planning application.
21. Bedroom 3 would be single aspect with one external window facing into a courtyard that would be created between the side extension proposed towards the rear of the building. The appellant states that the distance between this window and the blank opposing elevation of the extension would be a little more than 3m and the Council considers the distance would be less than 3m. Notwithstanding this dispute, the relationship with the proposed extension would be very close and the window would be further hemmed in by the high fence along the side boundary and the side elevation of the main dwelling.
22. Irrespective of whether the height of the proposed extension would not be materially higher than the top of the window serving Bedroom 3, this relationship would result in a very limited outlook from this room and a restriction of daylight and sunlight, particularly given the window would be broadly north-west facing. It is likely that occupiers would have very limited views of the sky and the juxtaposition with built form would likely restrict sunlight entering the room for a large portion of the day. In the absence of any technical evidence in this regard, for the above reasons, I find this bedroom would be gloomy, oppressive and not conducive to an acceptable standard of internal amenity.

23. This conclusion is drawn irrespective of whether future occupants may be transient or not, particularly given HMOs share kitchen and living facilities and therefore future occupants are reliant on their bedrooms as their only private habitable space. To my mind, this emphasises the importance of ensuring such spaces provide acceptable internal living conditions. Therefore, whilst the HMO would be provided with a spacious kitchen/dining area, this would not overcome the harm I have identified in respect of outlook and light.
24. The HMO Standards require a single bedroom to have a minimum floor area of 9 square metres (sqm). The Council states that this bedroom would be 8.78sqm which slightly differs from the 9sqm annotation on the submitted plans. The appellant has not sought to dispute the Council's assessment of the area of this bedroom, and it is unclear how the Council has arrived at its floor area figure. Nevertheless, even if this is the more accurate area, the shortfall would be very marginal and is unlikely to be perceivable by future occupants. This minor shortfall in floor area would be contrary to the HMO standards and the guidance in the SPD, however, this would not unduly affect the living conditions of future occupants if considered in isolation. However, this shortfall does nothing to mitigate the significant harm to the living conditions of future occupants resulting from the poor outlook and restricted daylight and sunlight to this room. Therefore, the marginal nature of the bedroom size in this case only compounds my concerns regarding the overall living conditions for future occupiers.
25. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the development would fail to provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants with particular regard to internal space, light and outlook. This is contrary to Policy D6 of the LP and Policies H5 and DH1 of the RGLP. Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that housing is high-quality, avoids single aspect units, provides sufficient daylight, sunlight and appropriate living conditions for future occupiers.

Other Matters

26. The appeal site is proximate to 10, 11 and 12 Nevada Street which are Grade II listed buildings. Mindful of the statutory duty set out in Section 66(1) of the Act, I have therefore had special regard to the desirability of preserving their settings.
27. These buildings are four storeys in height and their significance, insofar as is relevant to this appeal, derives from their historic and architectural value, and the contribution they make to the composition of the street scene. Given the appeal building is part of a group of historic buildings that have attractive architectural features and reflect the historic evolution of the area, it contributes positively to the settings of these listed buildings.
28. Despite a very close interrelationship, given the proposed alterations and extensions are located to the rear and side elevations of the appeal building there would not be a high level of intervisibility between the development and the listed buildings. As such, the appeal scheme would not affect the significance of the listed buildings through development in their settings. Accordingly, I find it would preserve the settings of the listed buildings.
29. I also note that 4-7 Nevada Street are locally listed buildings and are therefore non-designated heritage assets. From the evidence before me and my own observations, their significance, insofar as is relevant to the appeal, derives from their group architectural value. The site is seen with these buildings and for similar reasons as set out above, contributes positively to their settings. However, for similar reasons, the

effect of the proposal on the setting of these buildings would be limited and would not result in any harm to their significance.

Conclusion

30. Notwithstanding my favourable findings regarding the effect on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS, I have found that the appeal scheme would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the WGCA, resulting in harm to its significance. It would also harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and fail to provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants. Collectively these harms bring the scheme into conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole. The other material considerations before me, including the aforementioned public benefits of the scheme, do not indicate that that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

H Whitfield

INSPECTOR