



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 November 2025

By G Powys Jones FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/25/3368252

Flat first floor, 197 Earlsfield Road (Unit B), London, SW18 3DD

- 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 Girish Grover of AG Gateway Ltd against the decision of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0684.
 - The development proposed is alterations including installation of a first floor level external rear walkway and external metal stairs together with a 1.1m high glass balustrade, and associated installation of sliding doors to first floor rear elevation, in connection with provision of access from the first floor flat to the rear garden area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. The proposals are described above, but I noted that the plans submitted with the application are inaccurate in some respects. For example, the sliding doors to the first floor rear elevation, described as a proposal, have already been installed. These are fronted by a Juliette balcony. The garden has already been subdivided in two by means of timber fences.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposals on: (a) the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings, and (b) on the living conditions of the residents of neighbouring dwellings with particular reference to privacy and visual impact.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property forms part of a terrace, being a dwelling sub-divided into two flats. The flat on the ground floor has direct access to the rear garden, whilst the upper floor flat has none. To provide the occupants of the upper floor flat with access to external amenity space, the intention is to create what is in effect an elevated walkway across a ground floor flat roof, to descend by means of a staircase into a sectioned off portion of the garden. The walkway would be distinguished by glazed balustrading which the appellant says could be increased in height to avoid loss of privacy.

5. I do not regard the alterations to openings in the rear elevation as objectionable and I acknowledge that the elevated walkway would not be seen in the public realm, that is, it would be apparent only to neighbouring residents. The appellant suggests that the balustrading would be subordinate to the host property integrating successfully with its rear elevation. I do not share that view. To my mind the balustrading, more so if it was set at an increased height, and the staircase, would stand out obtrusively appearing incongruous and unsightly to local residents either side of the property, and in the case of the staircase, to the occupants of the ground floor flat.
6. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not sit harmoniously in its visual context and would harm the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings. Accordingly, a material conflict arises with those provisions of policy LP5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan (WLP) in respect of residential extensions and alterations, providing that proposals should respect and complement the form and detailing of the host property.

Living Conditions

7. The appellant acknowledges, in view of the walkway's height and position, that elevated views into neighbouring properties would be available to its users, but it is argued these would be fleeting and short lived, and therefore not harmful.
8. Views downwards into neighbouring gardens would be available from the walkway at close quarters, and into neighbouring bedrooms. The use of the staircase would also enable its users to look directly through the appeal property's ground floor flat's glazed rear doors. The use of the walkway and staircase, even intermittently, would inevitably prove intrusive to neighbouring residents resulting in unacceptable overlooking and loss of privacy. Neighbours would also perceive that they may be overlooked when using their gardens. The effect of raising the height of the balustrading may partly overcome loss of privacy but would make the structure more incongruous.
9. I conclude that the proposal would materially harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents by reasons of unacceptable overlooking and loss of privacy. Accordingly, a material conflict arises with those provisions of WLP policy LP2 requiring that development proposals should not adversely impact the amenity of occupants of neighbouring properties.

Other matters

10. All other matters raised in the representations have been considered, including the references to the *National Planning Policy Framework*, the Council's SPD¹, and the representations made by a neighbouring resident. No other matter is of such strength or significance as to outweigh those which led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

¹ Supplementary Planning Document – 'Housing' November 2016