The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2019

by J Hunter BA (Hons) Msc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/19/3233566
58 Alness Road, Manchester M16 8HW

- 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 EMT Management Ltd against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref 123546/FO/2019, dated 8 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 July 2019.
- The development proposed is the construction of one pair of semi-detached dwellings.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on i) the character and appearance of the area and ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of numbers 58 Alness Road in respect of private amenity space and No 56 Alness Road and No 76 Brantingham Road in respect of noise, disturbance, outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site forms part of the garden serving no 58 Alness Road. The host property is a semi-detached house occupying spacious grounds with a dual aspect onto Alness Road to the east and Brantingham Road to the south. The immediate area is characterised by similar detached and semi-detached properties set back from the road with long rear gardens. On the opposite side of Brantingham Road there are smaller, more densely developed modern town houses. However, and overall, the area has a spacious verdant character.

4. The proposal would introduce a pair of substantial sized semi-detached properties into the rear garden area of No 58 Alness Road. They would each have a frontage onto Alness Road and would be set slightly forward of the established building line.

5. I accept that there are a number of three storey properties in the vicinity and that in general terms the proposal has been designed to reflect the character of the area in terms of scale and materials. I concur with the Council that bay windows are not a prominent feature within the local area, but the inclusion of

such windows would not in themselves cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposal would see the subdivision of an existing large residential plot and the introduction of two additional dwellings. The size of the properties in relation to the appeal site would materially alter the spacious pattern of development in the area. The result would be two dwellings set within uncharacteristically small and cramped plots which would be at odds with the otherwise spacious character and appearance of the immediate locality.

7. For the above reason, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area in direct conflict with Policies SP1, EN1 and DM1 of Manchester's Local Development Framework- Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 (CS) which collectively seek, amongst other things, to promote well designed places that create and enhance local character.

Living Conditions

8. I acknowledge that the appellant has designed the properties to reflect the guidance on internal space standards and that a suitable amount of off-street parking would to serve each property. The host property no 58 Alness Road would retain a good amount of private amenity space to the front and side. However, the proposed dwellings would have very little private outdoor amenity space which would comprise a narrow strip of lawn that would run along the side of each property. This would not be sufficient to provide for a household's requirements, namely sitting out, drying clothes and children's play. In this regard, I find conflict with the requirements of Policy DM1 of the CS which seeks to ensure adequate internal accommodation and external amenity space.

9. I note that whilst the window positions and designs would be such that there may be no significant loss of privacy for the occupiers of any of the neighbouring properties, the rear wall of the proposed dwellings would run along the shared boundary of No 76 Brantingham Road for almost the full length of the rear garden area. The rear elevation would have a height of approximately 9 metres and would sit around 1.5 metres from the shared boundary. Consequently, owing to their scale and position, the proposed dwellings would have an unacceptably enclosing and overbearing impact when viewed from this neighbouring outside amenity space.

10. The properties would be located due south of the front garden of No 56 Alness Road and set forward of the established building line by approximately 2 metres. Therefore, due to the proximity of the gable wall there would be some overshadowing of this space particularly when the sun was lower in the sky during the winter months. Whilst, I appreciate that the occupiers of No 56 Alness Road have alternative outdoor amenity provision to the rear of the property, the proposal would nonetheless result in a significant and unacceptable loss of light to this outside amenity space to the front of the property.

11. The Council has raised concerns over the noise caused by vehicular movements associated with the proposed dwellings with particular reference to the occupiers of no 76 Brantingham Road. The two proposed parking spaces would be located to the front of the new dwellings on the opposite side of the

buildings from the rear garden of no 76 Brantingham Road, in line with other off-street parking in the vicinity and with access from Alness Road. Whilst I do appreciate that there would be some increase in vehicular movements arising from the development, acknowledging the scale of the development I do not consider that the movements would be significant enough to lead to any significant noise and disturbance effects.

12. The proposed dwellings would be positioned to the north of No 58 Alness Road and the development would require the demolition of single storey outbuilding that adjoins the north elevation of the property as well as a detached garage currently located at the northern end of the appeal site. The host property would retain outdoor amenity space to the side and front that could comfortably accommodate some off-street parking and space for the household's requirements as described above. Nonetheless, the fact that I have not found harm in relation to the living conditions of occupiers at no 58 Alness Road does not outweigh the other harm that I have identified above.

13. I conclude that that the development would have a significantly detrimental effect of the living conditions of no 56 Alness Road and no 76 Brantingham Road in respect of outlook and light and would not therefore accord with the amenity requirements of Policy DM 1 of the CS.

Conclusion

14. For the collective reasons outlined above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

J Hunter

INSPECTOR