The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2015

by Roger Catchpole Dip Hort BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 25 September 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/15/3002149
27 Egerton Road, Manchester M14 6YQ

- 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 Mr Zahid Hanif against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref 105609/FO/2014/S1, dated 5 May 2014, was refused by notice dated 24 July 2014.
- The development proposed is single storey side and rear extension to allow an internal configuration for an additional sixth bedroom to C4 dwelling.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of successful appeals against the Council. Whilst I have paid careful attention to these decisions the circumstances are not similar in all respects because of four of them predate the current local development plan and the remaining two did not seek to increase the number of bedrooms. Consequently, this appeal has been determined on its individual merits and the evidence before me.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the cumulative effect of the proposal on the living conditions of local residents with regard to noise.

Reasons

4. The host property is situated in a residential area where a significant proportion of dwellings are occupied by students. The host property comprises a large, semi-detached house in multiple occupation (HMO). The proposal would lead to the creation of an additional bedroom and a consequent increase in the number of tenants in the property. The Council has estimated that approximately 52% of properties within 100m are HMOs. The appellant acknowledges the nature of the surrounding area but contends that an additional tenant would not lead to a significant over-intensification of use.

5. I accept that making provision for an additional tenant may appear insignificant. However, the combined effect of such incremental increases in areas of high HMO concentration nevertheless contributes to an existing imbalance that undermines the sustainability of local communities.

6. The views of permanent residents carry some weight in relation to this matter. This is because they have directly related the increased student numbers to a significant increase in the level of disturbance experienced in and around Egerton Road. Local residents have highlighted brawling, loud music and late night comings and goings as some of the underlying causes. In the absence of any substantiated evidence to the contrary I have no reason to doubt that there is an existing problem that would be compounded by the proposed development. I also note that the Student Strategy 2009 (as amended) indicates that the problems associated with shared houses in the City become more noticeable and raise more concerns at densities as low as 20%.

7. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the living conditions of local residents with regard to noise. This would be contrary to policies H11, DM1 and SP1 of the Manchester LDF Core Strategy DPD 2012 that seek, among other things, to prohibit extensions to HMOs in areas of high concentration and ensure that all new development protects local amenity and makes a positive contribution to the wellbeing of residents. Additionally, the proposal would also be contrary to paragraph 50 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 that seeks to create sustainable, mixed communities.

Other Matters

8. The appellant is of the opinion that the proposal is necessary in order to maintain a competitive edge. However, the economic benefits derived by the appellant would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to local residents.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Roger Catchpole

INSPECTOR