

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2016

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) PgDip MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/16/3155018

706 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Redbridge IG6 1HP

- 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 James Coad against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0927/16, dated 3 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is for the demolition of 5 unused garages and construction of 2 No. semi detached 2 bed houses.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are whether the proposed development would:
(i) provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers in terms of outlook and private amenity space; (ii) provide acceptable living conditions for occupiers of existing neighbouring properties; (iii) be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and; (iv) cause parking problems to the detriment of highway safety.

Reasons

Living conditions – future occupiers

3. The existing garages front Campbell Road close to its junction with Cranbrook Road. Whilst the Cranbrook Road properties are mainly commercial with residential above, Campbell Road is largely residential in character and has the character and appearance of an outer suburban neighbourhood. The quality of the neighbourhood is enhanced by the large rear gardens and mature trees that line the street. The layout of development and gardens provides substantial separation between the rear elevations of the housing. This makes a significant contribution to the open and spacious character of the area.
 4. The terraced block of five garages together with their concrete driveways occupy the entire site. Due to the site's relatively narrow depth, the proposed two storey properties together with vehicular parking either side would also take up a large proportion of the site. Although the dwellings would provide adequate internal floor space consistent with Table 3.3 of The London Plan 2015 (LP), the main aspect from habitable room windows is to the front with
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smaller windows to the kitchen facing out to the vehicle parking area on the one side and to a narrow passageway to the rear. This would be oppressive for future occupiers. In addition, the useable private outdoor space is also to the front immediately behind the pavement edge. This would be overlooked to a significant degree and would provide limited and consequently unsuitable outdoor private space for families.

5. Whilst there is little evidence to suggest that daylight provision would be inadequate, the combination of the above factors leads me to conclude that the proposal would not provide reasonable living conditions for future occupiers of the two houses. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Redbridge Core Strategy (CS) Strategic Policy (SP)3 which seeks to ensure that the Borough's built environment is of a high quality that serves the long-term needs of its residents. It would also be contrary to Policy 3.5 of the LP in this regard. Policy BD5 of the Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) is not relevant to this appeal as it relates to extensions to existing dwellings.

Living conditions – existing occupiers

6. The Council's concerns in respect of living conditions of existing occupiers are limited to the close proximity of the proposed dwelling nearest Cranbrook Road to the residential flats above the commercial property at No.706/704 Cranbrook Road. The distances involved between the appeal development and this property would not be untypical of what would be found in a mixed use area of this kind. However, from the garden areas of both No.706/704 and its neighbour No.700, occupiers would be confronted by a stark two storey structure within approximately 1-1.5m of their boundary. At this distance, the mass of the development would be unacceptably overbearing and, due to the orientation of these garden areas, would be likely to overshadow the gardens to a significant degree for a considerable part of the day.
7. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to CS Policy SP3 and Policy BD1 of the Council's DPD, which together, seek to ensure that new development amongst other things is of a high quality and is of massing, scale and design that is appropriate to its locality.

Character and appearance

8. The proposed development comprising strong gable projections to the front together with hipped roofs to the main roof line is not untypical of what is found in this pleasant suburban neighbourhood. It is also set back within the site, which is also characteristic. From the roadside, the appearance of the development would be in keeping with the area. Its shortcomings in terms of the inadequate rear garden depth would not be readily apparent from the public domain when viewed from either Campbell Street or Cranbrook Road. However, from private properties to the rear and side, the impression would be of a wholly cramped front of development. This on balance leads me to conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area to an unacceptable degree.
9. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to CS policy SP3 and DPD Policy BD1 that amongst other things require new development to be designed to a high quality that is appropriate to the area. Moreover it would also be contrary to Standard 1.1.1 of The London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance

that requires development proposals to demonstrate that the design responds to its physical context, including the character and local pattern of development.

Highway safety

10. Notwithstanding the Council's concerns about the loss of the five garages, the appellant has confirmed that the garages have not been used for many years. The garages appeared to not be in use during my site visit and I have no reason to doubt that there is any intention to reverse this decision.
11. There is however no evidence from the Council that a parking problem exists locally. Further no compelling evidence has been offered to show that on street parking or any vehicle movements associated with the development would have a severe adverse effect on road safety or the free flow of traffic. The National Planning Policy Framework also states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe and the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) dated 25 March 2015 highlights that local parking standards should only be imposed where there is clear and compelling justification.
12. In this case the appeal site is located in a relatively sustainable location. In relation to the actual scheme for two houses itself there are no objections from a highway point of view with the proposed access arrangements and the level of off road parking proposed being satisfactory.
13. Against this background the development proposed would not give rise to highway safety problems. In this regard the proposed scheme complies with DPD Policy T5 that seeks to ensure that development proposals make satisfactory arrangements for parking and access in the interests of highway safety.

Conclusion

14. Whilst I have found in favour of the appellant in terms of highway impacts, this does not override the concerns that I have identified in relation to living conditions and character and appearance. On this basis and having regard to all other matters raised, this appeal is dismissed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR