

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2016

by Roy Merrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 03 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3155665
218 West End Road, Ruislip HA4 6DU

- 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 Steven Pickett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 34890/APP/2016/1548, dated 20 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new vehicular crossover.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on highway and pedestrian safety and the free flow of traffic.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located between the junctions of West End Road with two other streets, Cornwall Road and Roundways. At my visit I noted that West End Road is a busy highway with vehicles frequently passing the appeal site. There were regular movements of vehicles to and from Cornwall Road.
 4. It was apparent from my visit that the appellant has converted the front garden area to provide two car parking spaces, with fencing and posts marking the boundaries with adjacent properties.
 5. Whilst the appellant has suggested they would be able to turn a vehicle and leave the site in forward gear, the restricted width of the front of the plot means that this would not be a convenient manoeuvre. I therefore consider it likely that drivers would choose the more convenient option of reversing away from the site onto West End Road.
 6. In terms of visibility, the aforementioned fencing and posts would obstruct views of the highway and footway to a degree for drivers seeking to manoeuvre away from the site. A tall boundary hedge to the front of No 220 West End Road would serve to exacerbate this obstruction.
 7. This restricted visibility combined with the busy nature of West End Road and the proximity of the aforementioned junctions, with the potential for drivers to be distracted by vehicles manoeuvring there, would result in it being difficult to
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drive safely and straightforwardly away from the property. This in turn would be detrimental to highway and pedestrian safety.

8. In terms of alternative provision for car parking, I noted during my visit that access to the rear of the appeal site and adjacent properties is made possible via a narrow lane. The appellant has stated that the existing garage at the rear of the property is too small to accommodate a car and it would appear that the entrance to this building has been physically blocked up. However, access to the rear of the property remains possible in principle and I concur with the Council that the continued use of this single point of access to the highway would be preferable to an additional crossover point on West End Road in highway safety terms. The fact that vehicular access to the rear of the appeal property is currently blocked does not justify the harm I have identified.
9. The appellant has referred to the absence of parking restrictions meaning that it would be possible to park a vehicle on West End Road outside the property. I have not been provided with any information that would lead me to dispute this. However, whilst I note that the development would remove this potential conflict point, for the above reasons this does not outweigh the safety benefits of avoiding an individual vehicular crossover and relying on parking provision potentially available at the rear of the property. I acknowledge that there are many other vehicle crossover points serving individual properties in the locality. I have no information regarding the background to these cases, however in any event this does not justify the harm I have identified in this particular case.
10. The manoeuvring of vehicles from the front of the property would disrupt the free flow of traffic on West End Road to a degree, though this would happen infrequently given the small number of vehicles connected with the property, and then for a short period each time. The proposal would not therefore result in significant disruption and inconvenience to the free flow of through traffic. Though the negative impact would be small, it would nevertheless compound the harm I have already identified.
11. The appellant has raised the point that drivers would seek to reverse into parking spaces serving the local shopping facilities on West End Road. I have been provided with few details regarding the location of these parking arrangements. However, having visited the West End shopping parade it was apparent that there are spaces situated along a side road away from the through traffic of West End Road. The circumstances in that situation are not therefore comparable to the current proposal and in any event I must assess this appeal on its individual merits.
12. I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to highway and pedestrian safety. Accordingly it would conflict with Policy AM7 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies 2012 and the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions 2008 insofar as they seek to protect highway and pedestrian safety.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

Roy Merrett INSPECTOR