
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Alexander Walker MPlan MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/16/3159737

11 Cambourne Way, Hounslow TW5 0PW

- 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 Zamir Khan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00192/11/P5, dated 12 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is to convert the existing house into 2 x two bedroom flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character of the area and the Council's housing strategy, with particular regard to the supply of family sized dwellings in the borough.

Reasons

3. Cambourne Way is a residential street comprising one and two-storey, semi-detached and detached dwellings. The properties are generally large in size with generous sized gardens and driveways. Based on the evidence submitted and my own observations on site, the properties in the street appear to be in single ownership and provide well-proportioned family sized dwellings. The setback position of the dwellings and the no through road provide a peaceful suburban character.
4. The appeal property is a detached dwelling which has been extended. The proposal seeks to divide the property into two flats; one at ground floor and the other on the first floor. Policy SC6 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (LP) 2015-2030 states that when considering the sub-division of properties, the net original internal floor area must be a minimum of 130sqm, which reflects the minimum standards of internal floor space required for new development.
5. The Council considers that the original floor area of the appeal property is 101sqm. The appellant argues that it is 105sqm. Even when considering the appellant's figure of 105sqm, it falls far below the minimum requirement of 130sqm.

6. In their Officers Report, the Council state that a ground floor bedroom and a first floor bedroom would not meet the London Plan Housing SPG guidelines of 12 sqm for a double occupancy bedroom, although they have not provided their calculations for the rooms. The plans submitted with the application are clearly annotated with all of the bedrooms exceeding 12sqm. Therefore, I find that the proposed flats would be two bedroom four person flats and would both fall within the LP's definition of a unit of family accommodation as set out in the Notes attached to Policy SC3 of the LP.
7. Notwithstanding the above, the provision of the two units of family accommodation would only be possible as a result of the previous extension of the property. The supporting text to Policy SC6 is clear in that the conversion of properties that have been previously extended to create a total accommodation of at least 130sqm will not be supported. To disregard this approach would undermine the Council's objective of securing a mix of housing.
8. Whilst the proposed external works would be minimal, the building would contain two properties as opposed to one. Therefore it would result in an increase in the number of bins, cars and general comings and goings from the site. Consequently, the multiple occupation of the building would be in marked contrast to the prevailing single family dwellings on the street and would harm the character of the area.
9. I find therefore that the proposal does not accord with the minimum size of dwelling considered suitable for sub-division as set out in the recently adopted Local Plan and would harm the character of the area. Whilst it would result in the net gain of one unit of family accommodation, it would fail to satisfy the requirements of Policy SC6 and undermine the purpose of it and the Council's objective of maintaining a supply of family sized dwellings.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has referred to flat conversions that have taken place in other London boroughs. Notwithstanding the absence of any details for these developments, they are within different authorities and therefore would be considered against different development plans. The appellant also argues that there is a need for two bedroom flats in the Borough. However, there is no evidence before me of such a need, nor that the need is greater than that of four bedroom properties. Accordingly, I have attributed limited weight to these matters.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Alexander Walker

INSPECTOR