
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by David Walker MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/16/3160478

**Land to rear of Robins Hearne and Littlewood, Ducks Hill Road,
Northwood, Middx HA6 2SQ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Daphne Newton against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 41674/APP/2015/2100, dated 22 June 2015, was refused by notice dated 30 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is 4 x two storey, 4-bed detached dwellings with associated parking and amenity space (outline planning application for access and layout with some matters reserved).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mrs Daphne Newton against the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The application to the Council was made in outline with the matters of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for future consideration. I have determined the appeal on this basis and in detail in relation to the access and layout information provided in detail, but treating the dwelling floor plans as illustrative only.
4. The description of the development provided by the appellant at section E of the appeal form is different to that provided within the application. To the extent that it has also been used by the Council in its decision notice I have used the amended description in the interests of consistency.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is an area of disused land located off Fringewood Close, a residential street with detached houses along one side only. Being positioned
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to the rear of the existing pattern of housing along Ducks Hill Road and Copsewood Way it has a 'back land' character and does not have the appearance of forming part of the domestic garden to Robins Hearne.

7. Although there is a history of previous planning permissions¹ at the appeal site I have no evidence before me that these remain extant. Therefore while the principle of development has previously been established I am required to consider the proposal against the policies of the development plan currently in force and any material changes in circumstances.
8. In this regard my attention has been brought to the recent 'Woodlands' development on adjoining land along Ducks Hill Road. It does not receive any mention within the Council's officer report² or appeal statement, and is not shown on any of the application plans. However, at my site inspection it was apparent that the Woodlands development introduces a substantial block of apartments in much closer proximity to the proposed dwellings than the nearest property on the plans, Robins Hearne.
9. Given the additional height and short rear gardens of Woodlands there can be no assurances that the proposed dwelling at Plot 4 would achieve suitable separation distances to fit in with the prevailing pattern of development and maintain the existing high levels of spaciousness. I acknowledge that the arrangement of houses along Copsewood Way is of limited significance to the proposal due to the limited visual association with that estate. The extensive trees and hedgerows of the appeal site would also largely screen the proposal in streetscene views along Fringewood Close.
10. However, the proposal would be clearly visible from properties along Duck Hill Road. On the limited information before me the close relationship between Plot 4 and the Woodlands would not appear to maintain existing densities or the spaciousness of the area. There being no flexibility over the layout of the dwellings the proposal would therefore result in a cramped development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The limited benefits of four additional units to the dwelling supply and the Council's acceptance of the access proposed would not outweigh this significant harm.
11. I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. As a result it would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One – Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies BE13 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Saved UDP Policies 2012 that seek to achieve high quality design that makes a positive contribution to local areas in terms of layout, and which complements and improves the character of the area. It would also conflict with Policies 3.5, 7.1 and 7.4 of the London Plan that require housing to enhance the quality of local places, have regard to pattern and grain, and improve or reinforce character, among other things.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Walker

INSPECTOR

¹ Planning Applications Ref: 41674/APP/2009/2643 and 41674/APP/2009/2651

² Report of the Head of Planning, Sport and Green Spaces to North Planning Committee 21 June 2016