
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 April 2017

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 April 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/17/3167171
113 High Street, Hounslow TW3 1QT

- 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 Paisley Corporation Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00607/113/P22, dated 29 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first floor rear extension and additional second floor to replace existing flat and providing four flats in total with associated entrance, bike storage and bin storage facilities.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a first floor rear extension and additional second floor to replace existing flat and providing four flats in total with associated entrance, bike storage and bin storage facilities at 113 High Street, Hounslow TW3 1QT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 00607/113/P22, dated 29 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 15.09.04 rev E, 15.09.05 Rev D, 15.09.06 Rev F, 15.09.07 Rev B and 15.09.09.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples.

Procedural Matters

2. I have taken the description of development as it is shown on the appeal form. Whilst this differs slightly from that shown on the planning application form, it most accurately describes the development to which this appeal relates. It is clear that the Council are content with this approach since the same description appears on their decision notice. I have proceeded on this basis.
 3. The appellant has provided amended plans. For clarity these are 15.09.04 Rev E and 15.09.06 Rev F. The former is an amended ground floor layout, showing
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changes to the rear access, the omission of a dedicated medium van space, and a larger storage area for cycles. The latter shows an amended rear elevation in light of the layout changes.

4. These plans did not form part of the scheme before the Council at the time they determined the application. Nevertheless, the changes are not fundamental and they were submitted with the appeal documentation at an early stage in proceedings. The Council have had opportunity to comment on them. For these reasons I consider that no party would be prejudiced by my acceptance of them as part of the appellant's evidence.

Main Issues

5. There are two main issues. These are:

- The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and
- Whether or not the proposed development would provide for adequate servicing and cycle storage.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

6. The appeal building is relatively modern. It is part of a larger two storey flat roofed building in commercial use to the ground floor with residential above. Large single display windows, commercial fascia signage and an extending canopy with outdoor seating dominate the ground floor frontage which is flush with the back edge of the pavement. A row of side by side top opening windows make up the first floor. There is little in the way of specific identifying features to the building, which is clearly of a utilitarian design. It is therefore of no significant architectural value. The wider High Street area has similar mixed uses housed in buildings of a wide variety of architectural styles, scales and heights.
7. I accept that the increase in the height of the building as a result of the extension would make it noticeably taller than the section adjacent. Arguably this would 'unbalance' the appearance of the building in the street scene and to an extent would also create a protruding wall when viewed in the context of the other immediate neighbour which has a conventional pitched roof. In a wider context however, there is no discernible uniformity to building height which do vary from two storeys to three and four in places. In addition, since taller buildings directly abut lower ones in a mix of roof styles and external treatments, a direct contrast of these elements alongside each other would not be an uncommon feature in the street scene.
8. The design of the extension would be in contrast with the remainder of the building but again there is a mix of materials and building design in the immediate area. There are some very modern, stark and individually designed buildings that would form the context within which the extension would be read. Owing mainly to the uniformity of the first floor windows and the continuous height of the roof, the existing building is identifiable as one whole that has been divided. Nevertheless, the fascia signage, ground floor frontage treatment and different uses all contribute towards some existing individuality for the component parts.

9. Neither the contrasting design nor the overall height of the extension would, in light of my findings above, result in harm to the character or appearance of the area. As such, the proposed development would not conflict with Policies CC1 or CC2 of the Local Plan¹. These Policies, amongst other things and along with section 7 of the Framework², seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality and contextually appropriate design and appearance to create attractive and distinctive places.

Servicing and Cycle Storage

10. The servicing of the building (deliveries, refuse collection et al) would be provided via the rear. There is an existing servicing access at this point which is gated and faces Hanworth Road.
11. When considering the changes that are shown on the above mentioned revised ground floor layout plan, the proposed development would provide a larger servicing area to the rear than is currently available. There is nothing in the evidence before me that would suggest that the existing area is insufficient for the needs of the public house and the existing first floor residential unit. The net addition of three modestly sized residential units would not to my mind place undue additional pressure on the area. The proposed servicing area could readily accommodate a medium sized van with ample circulation space around it. This would be more than adequate to accommodate servicing needs given the scale of the development.
12. In terms of servicing for refuse storage and collection, I note there is off street bin storage proposed. This appears to be adequate for the scale of the proposed development and sited in an accessible location from the street. It is clear from evidence on site that bins are currently arranged on the highway and this arrangement would remove such an obstacle. Collection wagons would not enter the site, and emptying would likely be within the highway as per the existing arrangements. I am of the view therefore that provision for refuse storage and collection would be adequate.
13. With regard to visibility and accessibility in general, I note the juxtaposition of flank walls that extend up to the back edge of the highway as well as how far the existing drop kerb extends relative to the rear of the site. However, the manner in which vehicles would enter the service area would not significantly change from the existing arrangements. Pedestrians would be well aware of the existence of the service area and there are parking restrictions along Hanworth Road directly outside. The stretch of Hanworth Road that the access would lead onto is straight, open and unimpeded by other fixed structures. When considering all of these factors together, visibility and accessibility would be sufficient for the requirements of the proposed access.
14. The revised ground floor layout plan shows a secure accessible area capable of accommodating up to eight cycles. This would be in accordance with the minimum requirements expressed by table 6.3 of the London Plan, to which Policy EC2 of the Local Plan refers when addressing cycle storage requirements for new development. I can therefore make no conclusion other than that the proposed development would provide adequate storage for cycles in accordance with the development plan.

¹ London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 Volume One

² The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

15. When taking all of the above matters together, the proposed development would provide for sufficient servicing, access and cycle storage to meet its needs. Further, it would not adversely affect the safety of either pedestrians or vehicular users of the highway. Consequently, the proposed development would be in accordance with Policy EC2 of the Local Plan. This Policy, amongst other things and along with section 4 of the Framework, seeks to promote sustainable transport and safe and secure layouts to new development.

Conditions

16. I have regard to the conditions suggested by the Council and the comments of the appellant in response. In the interests of clarity and enforceability, I have made some consequential changes which are reflected in the wording I have used.
17. For certainty I have specified the approved plans as well as imposing the standard time condition for the commencement of development. In the interests of an appropriate external appearance, I have set out that external materials shall be agreed. This should be done prior to the commencement of development as such detail goes to the heart of the planning permission.
18. I have not imposed conditions requiring details of cycle or refuse storage. These arrangements, which I have found to be acceptable, are shown on the approved plans which are addressed by a separate condition.
19. The Council have also suggested a condition requiring a scheme to be agreed describing the means by which future residents shall be excluded from any controlled parking zone which may be in force in the area at any time. I have not imposed such a condition given there is no evidence before me to suggest that it would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons and subject to the conditions set out above, the appeal is allowed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR