
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2017

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 15th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/17/3168880

1 Commonwealth Avenue, Hayes UB3 2PL

- 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 Jas Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 5362/APP/2016/3810, dated 14 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and erection of new two bedroom dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on (a) parking provision and highway safety and (b) the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Parking provision and highway safety

3. There is little controlled parking on Commonwealth Avenue, with limited space for off-road parking in front of properties along much of the road. At the time of my late morning site visit, the road was parked up including two cars on the pavement in front of 1 and 3 Commonwealth Avenue. It is likely that there would be further parked cars along the road in the evenings and at weekends. As a residential side road, Commonwealth Avenue is unlikely to be particularly busy in terms of traffic movements, but a large amount of on-street parking would impede the flow of vehicles and create a risk to highway and pedestrian safety.
 4. There would be sufficient space in front and to the side of 1 Commonwealth Avenue to provide two off-road parking spaces for this existing property in the event that the proposed development was constructed. However, the amount of space between the proposed dwelling and the front boundary would be tight. While one car could be parked to the side of the proposed dwelling, it would be difficult to enable a second car to be parked in front of the dwelling.
 5. As a consequence, the development would not be able to accommodate the two parking spaces required by the Council's parking standards. Any additional on-street parking as a result of the development would add to the already
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congested nature of Commonwealth Avenue, further impeding the flow of traffic and increasing the risk to highway and pedestrian safety.

6. The appellant states that they could alter the existing front boundary wall to give full access, but I am not convinced that the alignment of the proposed dwelling would provide enough room for two spaces within the site boundary. Thus, it would not be possible to secure off-road parking spaces by planning condition, and any realignment of the dwelling would be best addressed through a fresh planning application.
7. Concluding on this main issue, the proposed development would have a negative effect on parking provision and highway safety. Thus, it would not accord with Policies AM7 and AM14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved UDP Policies 2012 ("Local Plan Part 2") which, amongst other things, seek to avoid prejudicing the free flow of traffic or highway and pedestrian safety and provide sufficient parking.

Character and appearance

8. Commonwealth Avenue is characterised by two storey semi-detached properties of similar design closely spaced together. There is more space between properties on corner plots as the road curves east towards Cromwell Road, but extensions and outbuildings have partly eroded this characteristic. The pattern of development is replicated in surrounding streets, with examples of detached properties on corner plots such as a recently built house adjoining 65 Bishops Road.
9. In the case of the appeal site, there is a substantial gap between 1 Commonwealth Avenue and 99 Cromwell Road. The existing single storey flat roof garage to the side of No 1 occupies part of this gap but there is reasonable space between the garage and the properties at No 1 and No 99.
10. The proposed development would be unusual as a detached dwelling and would erode some of the gap between No 1 and No 99 by virtue of being two storeys. However, the appearance and scale of the dwelling would be comparable to existing dwellings in the surrounding area, including detached dwellings on corner plots, so would not be particularly incongruous. Furthermore, the dwelling would broadly follow the footprint of the existing garage and ensure reasonable spacing between the dwelling and the properties either side at No 1 and No 99. The spacing would remain greater than the more closely spaced dwellings on the straight section of Commonwealth Avenue, and so the dwelling would not appear cramped.
11. Concluding on this main issue, the proposed development would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would accord with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved UDP Policies 2012 ("Local Plan Part 2"). Amongst other things, these policies require development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment, harmonise with the street scene and respond to local character. It would also follow the guidance of the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document on Residential Layouts 2006 which seeks development that contributes positively to the appearance of an area.

Other Matters

12. I note that the proposed dwelling appears to comply with local authority space standards and access requirements, and would provide adequate garden space. It would also not affect the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties in terms of outlook or privacy. However, this does not outweigh the negative effects in terms of parking provision and highway safety.

Conclusion

13. The proposed development would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area, but would have a negative effect on parking provision and highway safety. For this reason, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR