
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2017

by S Jones MA DipLP

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

Decision date: 03 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/17/3170918

2 Mossford Green, Barkingside, Ilford IG6 2BX

- 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 and Mrs Neil and Jill Findlay against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1815/16, dated 12 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing building and construction of 3 flats over 3 floors with 1 bedroom per flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on

- the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- parking and highway safety.

Reasons

2. The site is currently a detached one storey building used as a commercial workshop on a suburban residential road running off the high street so that it lies behind the Iceland supermarket that fronts onto the main road and is adjacent to its carpark. To the other side and the rear are modest two storey residences. Opposite are some offices and then the open land of the park. It is a tapering site, narrowing down from the frontage towards the rear, and constrained by the rear access to the adjacent forge cottages and the boundary with the Iceland supermarket.
 3. The proposed development would create three storeys of one bedroom flats with a mansard roof to accommodate the top level. I acknowledge that the site falls between the local town centre high street characterised by shops and offices, and the rest of the residential road and general area characterised by dwellings, gardens and the park. However, in terms of practical distance, the site is closer to the residences than it is to the high street. I also acknowledge that the proposed design has tried to bridge the differences in style between the two types of character above, and the design has been refined to take account of residential properties and their features. Nevertheless, whilst the
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overall height of the building would correspond with the roof heights of the nearby houses, the proposed building's greater depth, front dormer, and the built up mansard style roof design in particular would give the proposal a bulky appearance out of scale with the more modest proportions of the houses. It would therefore be a dominant and incongruous addition to the streetscene. There are some commercial buildings nearby, including the police station, but for the reasons already given the design does not respond appropriately to the largely residential appearance of the road.

4. Due to the location opposite a public open space and directly adjoining a supermarket car park, the police station and offices, I cannot conclude that views of the site would be limited. The retention of the existing trees or shrubs would not help to limit views of the proposed building from the supermarket carpark because they would not obscure the actual building, but rather the proposed bin store.
5. In view of the above I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently the development also conflicts with Policy SP3 of the 2008 Redbridge Core Strategy Development Plan (CS) because it fails to respect the amenity of the locality generally, and also conflicts with Policy BD1 of the 2008 Redbridge Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan (BW) because it would not be compatible with the character and amenity of the area in which it is located, and its design scale, bulk and massing would not be appropriate to the locality.

Parking and Highway Safety

6. I note there was an application stage Parking Study in the Planning and Transport Statement which indicated there were some available parking spaces in the area on the day of the study. Although demand for on street parking places in this area may be high, I have not been provided with any evidence that this in itself causes highway safety problems. Bearing in mind that the development is for small one bedroom flats only, it is likely in my view that residents would not have cars. Even if they did, I consider it would be no greater in extent than the parking that could be generated by the existing use. Moreover, there is good availability of public transport on the high street, the site is in an urban sustainable location with a good PTAL 4 rating, and cycle parking would be provided. Against this background I find the absence of on-site parking would be acceptable.
7. Consequently I conclude that the proposal does not conflict with Policy T5 of the BW because this refers to maximum parking standards rather than minimum standards, and lesser provision would be acceptable because of the accessibility of the site, the nature of the development proposed, and the character of the area.

Other Matters

8. I understand that there have been discussions about a further reconfiguration of the residences. However, that matter does not comprise part of this appeal and does not fall to be determined by me. Concern was raised about the proposed landscaping condition but it will not be imposed as the appeal is being dismissed.

9. Redevelopment of the site for residential use would supply housing at higher density in an urban sustainable location. I appreciate there have been no neighbour objections to the scheme. It would also improve the appearance of the site which is currently in a poor state of repair, including the area of land at the frontage if it was brought up to adoptable standard and became public highway. Although parking spaces could be provided on that area if it did become public highway, this would be a decision for the highway authority and the development would not secure that. I appreciate that the location is within 50m of Barkingside Town Centre and that redevelopment of the site could be an investment opportunity in the area as noted in the plans to improve Barkingside and the identification of the site as Opportunity Site 124. The scheme would help to contribute to those aims. Despite these advantages, they do not overcome the harm I have identified in relation to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

10. Although I have not found harm related to parking and highway safety, I have regarding the character and appearance of the area. That is the prevailing consideration and as such I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Jones

INSPECTOR