
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 June 2019

by P J Staddon BSc, Dip, MBA (Distinction), MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/19/3225147
231 Ealing Road, Northolt, London UB5 5HS

- 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 Souren Shahiean Sidhu against the decision of the London Borough of Ealing Council.
 - The application Ref 183956FUL, dated 31 May 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is the formation of vehicle crossover with associated hardstanding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The development description stated in the application form is 'dropped kerb application'. However, the proposal also entails the formation of a hardstanding and associated works. I have therefore adopted the description used by the Council in its decision notice, which more fully describes the proposed development.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 - Whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway safety.
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Northolt Village Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

Highway Safety

4. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi-detached residential property which is situated on a corner plot at the junction of Ealing Road and Court Farm Road. The property is set back from the junction behind a front garden which includes a grassed area.
 5. The front garden abuts the footway and follows the junction radii as it turns the corner, such that part of the boundary faces Ealing Road (to the front of the property) and part faces Court Farm Road (to the side of the property). There
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are double yellow lines along the curved corner section and on the corner opposite adjacent to 235 Ealing Road.

6. The appeal proposal would create a 3.5 metre wide vehicular crossover on the Court Farm Road frontage, at the point where it straightens after the junction curve. The greater part of the front garden would be hard surfaced with some soft landscaping beds around two sides.
7. In my assessment, the proposal would be likely to create highway safety hazards for pedestrians and motorists. This is because the crossover would be positioned in very close proximity to the junction and its use would conflict with traffic and pedestrian movements around this corner. These hazards would be exacerbated by the limited visibility that would exist, due to obstructions caused by the adjacent boundary fence on Court Farm Road and the presence of parked cars on the street. I also noted that the footway along the front of the site is well used by pedestrians and links across Ealing Road to a path crossing the parkland to the west.
8. I have taken into account the presence of a crossover on the opposite side of the road serving No 235 Ealing Road. This looks to have been established some time ago and there are no details before me concerning its history. In any event, the presence of another substandard vehicular access does not in itself create a case for allowing the current proposal, which I must determine on its own individual merits.
9. I have also noted the appellant's suggestion that a road safety assessment by a road safety engineer would establish that the proposal would not present a road safety hazard. However, no such assessment has been submitted and there is insufficient evidence to conclude that placing a crossover in such close proximity to a relatively busy junction would not adversely affect highway safety.
10. On this main issue, I conclude that the proposal would be likely to create highway safety hazards. This means that it conflicts with policy 6.3 of the London Plan (2016) which states that developments should not adversely affect safety on the transport network.

Character and appearance of the Northolt Village Green Conservation Area

11. The appeal site lies within the Northolt Green Village Conservation Area (CA). The Council's CA Appraisal (2007) identifies that private open spaces play an important role in maintaining a rural village character and it says that front gardens provide green settings for many houses. The CA Management Plan (2008) identifies the importance of 'front and side plots' to the preservation of the CA.
12. The current front garden is grassed, with a boundary hedging and vegetation. As such, it does create a green setting for the property and contributes to the CA's character. The proposal would remove part of the hedge and displace most of the grassed area. There is also a difference in levels between the point of the crossover from the highway and the ground floor level, suggesting that some engineering would be required to create the hardstanding. Whilst the proposal would include some areas for soft landscaping, it will result in a notable amount of hard surfacing on a prominent corner plot. The overall effect

will be a diminution of the existing green setting and the contribution it makes to the CA's character.

13. On this main issue, I conclude that the proposal would result in some harm to the CA's character and appearance. Whilst this harm would be quite limited, it means that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. This weighs against the proposal and means that it conflicts with policy 7C of the Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) (2013), which requires developments within the CA to retain and enhance characteristic features. It also conflicts with the CA Management Plan (2008) and CA Appraisal (2007). The proposal further conflicts with policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2016) and policy 7.4 of the Ealing DPD (2013), which require new developments to respect and respond to local character.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons stated above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P. Staddon

INSPECTOR