



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/19/3226067

136 Plumstead High Street, Plumstead, London SE18 1JQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Oluwole Alayo against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref: 18/3642/F, dated 15 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2018.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing building at rear of 136 Plumstead High Street and construction of new two-storey mixed commercial (bakery) at ground floor and associated office B1 and storage at first floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Preliminary Matters

2. The planning history of the site is acknowledged, specifically application Ref: 18/1435/F for proposed demolition of existing building and construction of a new two-storey building comprising bakery at ground floor level and associated Office (B1 use Class) and storage on the first floor. This application was refused planning permission in 2018, on grounds of highway safety and refuse storage.

Main Issue

3. The main issues are:
 - a) the effect of the proposed development on highway safety, and
 - b) whether the proposed development would make adequate provision for refuse and recyclable waste management.

Reasons

Highway safety

4. The appeal site is located to the rear of a two-storey end of terrace property. The latter houses a bakery and flat, and is within the Plumstead District Centre primary shopping frontage. A single-storey storage building is located on the site. The site is bounded to the rear by housing. The main access to the site is via a shared access track off Plumstead High Street, between the premises of a cash and carry business at No.134, and No. 136. The proposal is to demolish

- the storage building and provide a bakery to bake goods for the Angel Bakery shop at No.136, with first-floor office accommodation.
5. Plumstead High Street is a busy classified road and bus route subject to waiting and loading restrictions. On my site visit I saw the stretch of Plumstead High Street leading to the proposed access point was busy with traffic and pedestrians, albeit at a 'snapshot' in time. The proposed vehicular access intersects pavement near shops and a public house, and joins Plumstead High Street near a crossroads with traffic signals, and several other road junctions. These factors indicate a generally busy pedestrian and traffic context.
 6. Two staff parking spaces and one visitor parking space would be provided on site. The appellant states that the staff parking spaces would be accessed only between 08.30 and 09.00 and 17.00 and 17.30, and visitor parking would not exceed two traffic movements per day.
 7. The appellant describes two small collection and delivery vehicles using the rear access to serve the existing bakery and the neighbouring business at No.138, each with a maximum of two traffic movements per day, without any issues. The presence of a number of bins stored on both sides of the access track calls into question the practicability of vehicular access to the existing site. In any case, access and egress to and from the site from Plumstead High Street is 'tight', with the track as narrow as 2.9m in places. Moreover, the proposed new two-storey bakery and office building would result in a step up in the scale of floorspace and commercial activity on the site, which is likely to increase the volume of associated vehicle movements. Furthermore, I have no certainty that traffic movements to and from the proposed development would be limited to the levels suggested above.
 8. The Council's Transport and Highways team advise that it needs to be demonstrated that sufficient turning can be accommodated on site. There is not evidence before me to demonstrate that visitors' and employees' vehicles could safely access and exit the proposed development, including its parking bays and the junction with Plumstead High Street, without causing unacceptable risk to pedestrians and vehicles, including along the latter road.
 9. Deliveries of flour would take place before 06:00 on an unspecified number of days per week, to be unloaded before 6.00 from Plumstead High Street. It is recognised that traffic levels are likely to be lower in the early morning than at some other times. However, the Council's Transport and Highways team advise that as Plumstead High Street is a busy classified road and bus route which is subject to loading and waiting restrictions, all servicing for the proposal should be on site. Given the proximity of the site access to the crossroads, the safety of the proposed kerbside delivery is open to question. Even if on-street delivery were safe, I find that the concern described above in relation to access by other vehicles weighs against the proposal.
 10. It is proposed during the construction phase to use parking bays on Lakedale Road for storage of skips for excavated material from the site, and delivery of construction materials for transfer to site by tipper trucks. However, Lakedale Road is a busy public highway with a variety of shops and businesses, including a Tesco Express, on the approach to the crossroads with Plumstead High Street. The proposal would result in loss and displacement of on-street parking on the busy shopping street during the construction phase. Moreover, delivery vehicles and tipper trucks loading and unloading would disrupt traffic flow in

the highway, on the approach to the crossroads. Bearing in mind these concerns, it is not certain that such a proposal would be safe, or acceptable to the local highway authority and achievable.

11. Neither a safe waste collection area for waste collection vehicles to access, nor a maximum walking distance from the bin store to a safe collection area is demonstrated, as suggested by section 5 of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Guidance Notes for the storage and collection of waste and recycling materials for New Developments Notes (2015) (GN). This is likely to result in highway safety risk to, and arising from, waste collection vehicles waiting on the busy stretch of Plumstead High Street described above. This would exacerbate the highway safety harm identified above.
12. Taken together, the above factors lead me to conclude that safe conditions could not be provided in respect of access for staff, visitor, delivery, and refuse collection vehicles. Therefore, the proposal would not provide a sufficient level of highway safety. As such, it would conflict with Policy IM(a) of the CS and Policy 6.3 of the LP. Together the policies seek to ensure that development has regard to the road hierarchy and does not adversely affect safety on the transport network. The lack of demonstrable highway safety would also conflict with safety guidance in the GN.

Refuse and recyclable waste

13. It is not disputed that the proposed bin store at the south end of the site, would be sufficient for use by the existing and proposed bakery and offices, in terms of size. Moreover, I recognise that the proposal would be a tidier alternative to the current storage by the bakery of bins on the access track. I note the appellant's statement that the collection of refuse would be the same as for the existing refuse arrangements. However, details of existing waste vehicle collection arrangements are not before me. Moreover, I have no evidence to suggest that extension of existing arrangements to handle additional volumes which the new building would create would be acceptable to the waste collection service provider.
14. Therefore, the proposal would conflict with Policy DH1 of the CS and Policy 5.16 of the LP. Together the policies seek to ensure that development proposals demonstrate on-site waste management, including for recyclable waste.

Other Matters

15. It is recognised that the proposal would support and enhance the function and viability of Plumstead District Centre, and would create jobs. Moreover, it is recognised that the proposal would tidy up a site which suffers from fly-tipping. However, these benefits would not outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion

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

William Cooper

INSPECTOR