



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2019

by Mr W Johnson BA(Hons) DipTP DipUDR MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/19/3234552

68 Headstone Road, Harrow HA1 1PE

- 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 Dexter Gaul of Hosted IT Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0201/19, dated 16 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Conversion of existing house into 4no. self-contained flats'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Policy CS1.B of the Council's Core Strategy 2012 (CS) has been referenced by both main parties in their submissions, I will therefore not prejudice any party in taking this Policy into consideration during the determination of this appeal.
3. For clarity and precision, I have taken the description of the development in the banner heading from the application form. However, I have omitted 'detached' as the property comprises an end terraced house. I have also taken the name of the appellant's company from the appeal form as it is complete.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area, with particular regard to the proposed refuse and recycling area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises an extended 2-storey end terraced house, traditional in appearance, on a busy road that forms an arterial route to the town centre. In the immediate locality of the site the road is residential in character with terraces, flats and semi-detached properties present, generally 2-storey in scale with majority of the properties having small front gardens.
6. The proposal is to convert the host property into 4no. flats with additional extensions and alterations. The Council only raise concerns regarding visual impact from refuse and recycling storage. It was apparent during my site visit that refuse and recycling bins are currently stored within the front garden space of the host dwelling, which is similar to other neighbouring properties in the street. The proposed development would require provision of 10no. bins to

serve the proposed 4no. units. These 10no. bins would be located directly behind a brick boundary wall that would be erected to the front of the property. During my visit, I noted that a notable number of bins are present on Headstone Road and that many of the properties have been sub-divided, increasing the number of bins serving the respective properties.

7. I find that there was a cumulative effect from the numerous bins already present on Headstone Road. I acknowledge that the appellant has sought to address this issue, through proposing to site the associated bins behind a new wall and through the installation of purpose made refuse storage units, which I accept would reduce their visual effect. Nevertheless, on the information before me I am not convinced that the proposed bin storage solution and the erection of a new wall would successfully mitigate against the potential harm that would occur from locating a significant number of bins in the modest front garden of the host property. Whilst, I note that the proposal would comply with the overall requirements of the Council's Code of Practice for the Storage and Collection of Refuse and Materials for Recycling in Domestic Properties 2008, this document does not consider matters such as visual amenity. I find that the number of bins proposed to be stored in the front garden is excessive and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area.
8. The appellant has referenced various approved planning applications¹, which I note. Additionally, both main parties have supplied various appeal decisions² in support of their respective submissions. However, relatively little detail has been provided regarding the particular planning backgrounds to these schemes and in the case of the appeal decisions, I do not know what evidence was before the Inspectors at the time of their decisions. Consequently, I cannot be sure that these are entirely representative of the circumstances in the appeal before me. In any event all appeals are judged on their own individual merits. Accordingly, that is how I have assessed this appeal scheme.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area. As a consequence, it would be contrary to the character and appearance aims of Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016 (LonP), CS Policy CS1.B, Policies DM1 and DM26 of the Council's Development Management Policies 2013 (DMP). It would also fail to accord with design guidance contained in the Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010. Furthermore, it would conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure high quality design.
10. LonP Policies 6.3, 6.9 and 6.13 and the Parking addendum to Chapter 6, and DMP Policy DM42 have been cited by the Council on its decision notice. However, these policies relate to transport, parking and cycling, and therefore, I find they are not directly applicable to the case before me.

Other Matters

11. I note that the appellant considers the property to be uninhabitable and I am sure that the appellant intends to improve the condition of the property. The proposed development would bring some social and economic benefits through

¹ P/3796/17 at 20 Headstone Road and P/3260/16 at 59 Gayton Road

² APP/M5450/A/10/2119963; APP/M5450/D/153138650; APP/M5450/W/17/3173978

the creation of additional dwellings and during the construction phase of the development. However, these are minor factors in favour of the development.

12. I have also had regard to concerns raised by the appellant about the way that the Council handled the application, but this does not affect the planning merits of the case. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

W Johnson

INSPECTOR