



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2020

**by Ian Harrison BA Hons DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 13 July 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/20/3246049**  
**79 Rosemary Avenue, Hounslow TW4 7JQ**

- 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 Bhinder against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
  - The application Ref 00960/79/P2, dated 31 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 December 2019.
  - The development proposed is a two storey side extension to create 2no. 1 bedroom, 2 person residential units.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. At Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Although that description reflects the Council's decision notice, neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

### Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
  - The character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area;
  - The supply of family housing;
  - Sustainable travel and pedestrian safety with particular regard to the proposed parking arrangements.
  - The living conditions of future occupiers, with particular regard to outdoor space arrangements for the proposed upper flat.

### Reasons

#### *Character and Appearance*

4. The appeal site is located within a residential area consisting of semi-detached and terraced dwellings. The terraced dwellings are similar in terms of their overall proportions and appearance, but most appear to have been the subject of extensions and alterations. In this regard, some of the nearby dwellings feature 2 storey side extensions that have a recessed front elevation and a maximum height

that sits below the tallest part of the host dwelling. The end-of-terrace dwelling at the appeal site has the appearance of having originally been alike the other dwellings within the surrounding area but has been extended through additions and alterations to the roof and, at the time of my site visit, appeared to be the subject of ongoing works of alteration. However, it remains similar to the other terraced dwellings in the locality in terms of its style, configuration, width and proportions. This similarity is a positive feature of the appearance of the street.

5. The proposed development would involve the erection of a two storey extension at the side of the building that would have its front elevation aligned with the front of the existing dwelling. The extension would be approximately half the depth of the existing dwelling, thereby enabling the extension to feature a pitched roof of lower height than the existing building. Behind the two storey side extension would be a single storey extension that would have a chamfered side elevation to reflect the alignment of the side boundary of the site.
6. The front elevation of the proposed extension would align with the front of the existing dwelling, thereby causing the widening of the dwelling to an extent that it would be noticeably wider than the other dwellings of the terrace. Although the roof would be lower in height, the absence of articulation at the front elevation would cause the dwelling to have a scale and appearance that would be unreflective of the terrace. This would erode the rhythm of the terrace in a manner that would detract from its appearance. The extension would also appear unlike the other extensions that have occurred within the surrounding area and, as such, would have an incongruous appearance that is not sympathetic to the locality.
7. In this regard, the proposal would be contrary to The Council's Residential Extension Guidelines SPD<sup>1</sup> (The RESPD) which states that side extensions should be proportionate and subordinate, with the front elevation being set back at least one metre from the front elevation of the existing house in order to allow the original proportions of the building to remain the prominent feature.
8. Although the proposed extension would also conflict with The RESPD by having a width that is slightly more than half the width of the existing dwelling and a chamfered side elevation at ground floor, these features of the proposal would not make the extension insubordinate or harm the character and appearance of the existing building or the surrounding area. However, this does not compensate for the harmful visual effect of the extension that has been identified above.
9. For these reasons, the development would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (The HLP), adopted 15 September 2015, which together seek to resist poor quality design and require that development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building and its context. For the reasons set out above, the two storey part of the side extension would also conflict with the RESPD in a manner that harms the character and appearance of the building and the locality.

#### *Supply of Family Housing*

10. The submitted plans show that the existing dwelling at the appeal site has four bedrooms and that its overall size and configuration lends itself to provide

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<sup>1</sup> Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document. A Guide for Householders. Adopted 20 December 2017.

accommodation that is suitable for occupation by a family. The proposed development would involve the formation of two flats, each with one bedroom.

11. Policy SC6 of The HLP states that dwellings can be converted to flats where they have an original floorspace in excess of 130 square metres. Furthermore, in locations that are suitable for families, Policy SC6 of the HLP requires the provision of at least one, family-sized unit at ground floor.
12. The annotations on the submitted plans indicate that, even after being extended, the floorspace of the existing building would be less than 130 square metres. Furthermore, I have no reason to conclude that the appeal site is not in a location that is suitable for families and yet, as each flat would have one bedroom, neither of the proposed residential units would be suitable for family occupation.
13. For these reasons, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the supply of family housing. The development would, therefore, be contrary to Policy SC6 of The HLP which requires that the sub-division of the existing housing stock is managed in the interests of protecting the character of the area and securing the provision of family-sized units within developments.
14. As Policy CC1 of The HLP relates to context and character, I consider it to be of limited relevance to this issue.

#### *Sustainable Travel and Pedestrian Safety*

15. The proposed flats would be served by a total of 3 off street parking spaces, which would be provided at the frontage of the site and accessed from a widened vehicle crossover within Rosemary Avenue.
16. The public transport accessibility level rating for this site indicates that it has good accessibility to public transport and, as such, the use of more sustainable modes of transport should be encouraged. However, the provision of 3 off-street parking spaces would encourage the use of cars in a manner that would undermine this objective. In this regard, the proposal fails to accord with the parking standards set out at Policy 6.13 of the London Plan (LP), adopted 2016, which indicates that, in the interests of encouraging cycling, walking and the use of public transport, flats of the size proposed should be provided with parking at a rate below one space per flat. In turn, the proposal conflicts with Policy EC2 of The HLP which requires compliance with the standards contained within the LP for similar reasons.
17. The provision of parking at the frontage of the site would result in the creation of pinch-points between parked cars and the bin stores and the front of the building, thereby obstructing circulation at the frontage of the site and restricting access to the ground floor flat and the rearmost garden. As such, the development would provide restricted access to the site for occupiers and visitors in a manner that does not constitute high quality design. Although I note the similar concerns of the Council in respect of the access to the bin stores and cycles stores, as full details of boundary treatments have not been shown on the submitted plans, it is not possible to be certain that access to these features would necessarily be restricted. In any event, this would not address the other restrictions and obstructions that would affect future users of the site.
18. The widened crossover would reduce the area of safe refuge for pedestrians and increase the likelihood of conflict between users of the highway in a manner that would reduce pedestrian safety. In this regard, I have no evidence before me that demonstrates that the width of the crossover would accord with the Council's Residential Crossovers and Off-Street Parking Policy as is required by Policy EC2 of the HLP.

19. The increased width of the crossover would also reduce the opportunity to park within the highway, thereby causing the loss of flexible, on-street parking that would be able to be used by the wider community. In this regard, policy EC2 of the HLP requires it to be demonstrated that sufficient public car parking remains or is re-provided in the area to serve local needs where there will be a reduction in off-street car parking. I have been provided with no evidence that demonstrates that adequate on-street parking would be retained and, as such, the proposal does not comply with the requirements of the abovementioned policy.
20. For the reasons given above, the development would have an unacceptable effect on sustainable travel and pedestrian safety with particular regard to the proposed parking arrangements. The proposal would, therefore, fail to accord with policies EC2 and SC6 of The HLP which require that development is of high quality design, accords with the Council's adopted policy on vehicle crossovers, does not cause an unjustified loss of on-street parking and includes no more off-street parking than suggested by the LP in the interests of maximising walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

#### *Living Conditions of Future Occupiers*

21. The proposed flats would each be served by a garden at the rear of the site, with the garden serving the ground floor flat being immediately adjacent to the building and the other flat being served by a garden at the rear part of the site that would be accessed via a walkway at the side of the building. As a result, the rearmost garden would be separated from the flat it would serve, with the access to the garden being divorced from the entrance to the flat. As set out above, the parking of cars and the provision of bin stores would obstruct movements at the frontage of the site, potentially in a manner that would restrict access to the garden. Furthermore, the position of the garden relative to the flat would discourage its use. Therefore, the development would not provide outdoor space that is sufficiently convenient to use to be considered to represent a high quality provision.
22. Whilst the rearmost garden would be of acceptable size, sufficiently enclosed, secure, private and reflective of local character in terms of its position, these factors do not compensate for the inadequate access to the garden and the effect of this on its usability.
23. Therefore, the development would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of future occupiers with particular regard to the provision of garden space. The proposal therefore fails to accord with policies SC5 and SC6 of The HLP which together require that housing developments include garden space that reflects the prevailing pattern and character of the local area and provides high quality living conditions for future occupiers with regard being had to the aspect, usability, size and enclosure of the garden.

#### **Conclusion**

24. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the development would be contrary to the development plan and, therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

*Ian Harrison*

INSPECTOR