
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2020

by James Taylor BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3244714

Land to the rear of 229 and 229a Victoria Road, Ruislip HA4 9BS

- 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 Mrs Tara O'Leary against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 75052/APP/2019/2543, dated 30 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolish existing garage and outbuildings, remove concrete hard standing and construct one new (one bedroom) house with side garden space. 1 parking space for New house, 2 no. parking spaces for 229 Victoria Road, and 1 parking space for 229A Victoria Road. Separate bin store and separate cycle store for 2 bikes.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. Since the Council issued its Decision Notice, the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (November 2012) has been withdrawn with the adoption of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2, Development Management Policies, Adopted Version 16 January 2020 (LP2). The Council have updated their position and the appellant has had opportunity to comment in light of this material change in circumstances. I have proceeded to determine the appeal on the basis of the relevant policies of the development plan, including LP2.
3. The Council have confirmed that the drawings schedule on the Decision Notice was completed erroneously and the plans on which they based their decision were marked as revision A. I have proceeded to determine the appeal on the basis of these revised plans which were validated by the Council prior to determination.

Background and Main Issue

4. The Council have clarified in its evidence that the appeal site is not located within a designated conservation area. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Bessingby Road and the surrounding area has a suburban residential character with a predominance of two-storey terraced housing. Relief from the sense of enclosure that this creates is provided with the housing being set-back from the road, and the open spaces/gardens on the return frontages of corner plots. Although currently separated from the gardens of 229 and 229A Victoria Road, the appeal site was historically part of the garden of No 229 and forms part of the return frontage. Along with the land opposite, the appeal site positively contributes to the open and spacious character at this point in the street scene. This is despite the site being unkempt and the existing outbuildings being dilapidated.
6. The proposal would erect a detached two-storey building that reflects the detailing of the terraced housing. However, it would be sited in isolation from the existing built form, approximately equidistant from the rear elevations of Victoria Road and the side elevation of 1 Bessingby Road. Consequently, the detached form of the proposal would be obvious and appear incongruous to the rows of terraced homes. The siting of the proposal would be contrary to the rhythm of the built form and the gaps between structures which contribute to the spatial character of the area. It would maximise the sense of enclosure rather than taking opportunities to minimise the effect on the open and spacious character at this point. Despite the various developments within the vicinity, including the partitioning of the site, these characteristics are still of significance.
7. The appellant has brought to my attention the development of 1A Kingswear Road, located at the rear of Hatherleigh Road. Whilst I note a number of similarities in terms of the context and built form, it is located some distance from the appeal site. Moreover, the siting of the proposal differs significantly. No 1A is sited in very close proximity to the adjacent end of terrace dwelling on Kingswear Road and appears contiguous with the terraced row. As such, this example does not set a context that justifies the proposal.
8. Therefore, in conclusion on the main issue the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies (Adopted November 2012); Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMH 6 of LP2; Policies 3.5, 7.1 and 7.4 of The London Plan, March 2016 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These policies seek, amongst other aims, to achieve high-quality design that reinforces or enhances local character and the quality of the area. It requires regard to be had to a presumption against the loss of gardens, the established street patterns, streetscape rhythm, gaps between structures and the degree of enclosure.
9. Finally, the Council have made reference to Policy HMHD 1 of LP2 within their evidence. However, I consider that this is of little relevance in this instance given that it relates to alterations and extensions to residential dwellings.

Other matters

10. Whilst paragraph 59 of the Framework refers to the objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, the provision of one additional unit, albeit potentially being suitable as a starter home, would make little meaningful difference. When judged against some of the core planning principles the

proposal would perform well in that it would be in a suburban area with reasonable access to services and facilities. However, as set out at paragraph 124 of the Framework, good design is also a key aspect of sustainable development.

11. Finally, the proposal would provide dedicated car parking for the existing Victoria Road properties as well as the new house. However, there are no parking restrictions on Bessingby Road and little evidence has been provided of parking stress. As such, I afford this provision little weight.

Conclusion

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

James Taylor

INSPECTOR