



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 November 2020

by John Felgate BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 25 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/20/3245148

Clapham Baptist Church, 823-825 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 3JL

- 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 Pastor Chris Watson, on behalf of Clapham Baptist Church, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 18/05443/FUL, dated 14 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as:
"Erection of a roof extension to western section of the existing church building, along with balconies and roof terraces on the south elevation, to facilitate the part change of use of the church from D1 use to C3 use, and the provision of 8 no. new studio, one and two-bed flats; enlargement of mezzanine area within church; erection of cycle store on Wandsworth Road elevation, and landscaping".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. In the application form, the proposed development is described as set out above. In the Council's refusal notice, the description was changed to include reference to 'widening the range of community uses'. However, this change does not appear to have been agreed with the applicant. Furthermore, whilst other submitted documents make reference to various community uses and activities, it is clear that these are intended to be ancillary to the main use as a church. I have dealt with the appeal on the basis of the description on the original form.
3. The Council's refusal notice cited 10 refusal reasons (RRs). Of these, RRs 2 and 3 related to two of the ancillary uses and activities referred to above. Subsequently, the Council has agreed that these RRs will not be pursued further. In view of the above, I agree that these are not appropriate matters for the present appeal.

Main Issues

4. In the light of the remaining RRs, the main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effects of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers;
 - whether satisfactory living conditions would be provided for the development's own future occupiers;
 - the effects on the character and appearance of the Wandsworth Road Conservation Area (the CA);

- whether the scheme would provide an acceptable mix of housing sizes;
- whether it would accord with relevant policies relating to affordable housing;
- whether it would accord with relevant policies for the protection of existing community facilities;
- whether adequate provision for cycle parking could be secured through conditions; and
- whether a planning obligation would be necessary with regard to car parking.

Reasons for Decision

Effects on neighbouring occupiers

5. The proposed development would create three new apartments at first floor level, and five more on the proposed new second and third floors. The main living rooms and balconies of all of these new units would face over the rear gardens of Nos 233 and 231 Victoria Rise, and the other properties beyond. In addition, in the case of proposed units Nos 3, 6 and 8, the balconies would also create the potential for views toward No 233's rear windows. To address these issues of overlooking, balcony screens are proposed, varying in height from 1.2m to 1.8m. These are proposed to be of 'fritted' glass or other obscured glazing, supported on timber posts.
6. In principle it seems to me that screens of the type proposed could achieve the aim of protecting neighbouring occupiers' privacy. To achieve that result, the fritting or obscuring effect would need to be fully opaque, and would need to be permanent in nature. But the detailed specification could be controlled by condition, and samples could be required if necessary. It is unclear whether the heights of the screens, as currently proposed, would be sufficient in all cases to prevent clear views of the affected areas and windows. But again it seems to me that this is a detail that could be resolved, and even amended, through conditions, if that were the only issue.
7. However, that is by no means the end of the matter, because the proposed screens would also have a significant visual impact. The screens would run approximately half-way along the building's south elevation. In the case of the first floor units, the screens would be positioned directly above the existing boundary wall, immediately alongside No 233's garden, and no more than about 6m from that of No 231. At this level, the base of the screens would be more than 2m above ground level, and their tops would be between 3m and 4m above ground. Seen from No 233 and 231 Victoria Rise, even allowing for the differences in ground levels, these first floor screens would be over-dominant and visually oppressive, due to their proximity and their overall height above ground. As such, they would have an unacceptably adverse impact on living conditions at these two properties.
8. The second and third floor screens would be set back from the boundary, and thus their impact on neighbours would be less than that of the first floor screens. But, seen all together, they would add to the overall impression of overbearing visual dominance. These upper floor screens therefore reinforce my view that in this respect the effect on neighbouring properties would be unacceptable.
9. With regard to any other impacts on neighbouring occupiers, I see no reason why they would be likely to experience unacceptable noise levels from the new

residential units, especially given that the location is within a busy district centre, where a relatively high level of background noise is likely anyway. Noise from the church and related activities is likely to be noticeable, but the church is an existing use, and is apparently not subject to any existing conditions in this respect. To my mind, these matters, relating to noise impacts on neighbouring properties, do not amount to a sufficient reason for objection.

10. However, my concerns remain regarding the visual effect of the proposed screens. Without them, the loss of privacy to gardens and rear windows would be unacceptable; but with them, in the absence of any further detail, the overbearing visual impact would be equally so. As such, the proposed development would have an unacceptably adverse impact on living conditions for the occupiers of the nearest adjoining residential properties.
11. In this respect the development would conflict with Policy Q2 of the Lambeth Local Plan (the LLP), adopted in September 2015, which seeks amongst other things to ensure that the amenity of adjoining occupiers is properly protected. This conflict carries substantial weight against the proposed scheme.

Living conditions within the development itself

12. In addition to their effects on neighbours, the balcony screens discussed above would also heavily restrict the outlook available from the proposed new units themselves, not just from the balconies, but also from most of the main habitable rooms. In all cases, the outward view from within the new flats' living/dining/kitchen areas would largely be confined to a view of the balcony areas, plus a limited view of the sky above. This highly restricted outlook from their main living spaces would be likely to give all of the interiors an unacceptable sense of enclosure. In the case of flats 2, 5, 7 and 8, all bedrooms would also have a restricted outlook, either for the same reason, or due to relying on high-level rooflights. In no case would any of the new units have a good standard of external outlook overall. This lack of outlook would result in unacceptable living conditions, again contrary to Policy Q2.
13. Turning to the matter of external amenity space, the appeal proposal would not provide any communal space, and five of the proposed balconies would be less than 10 sq m. These shortfalls would not be made up by means of additional internal space. In all these respects the scheme would fail to meet the requirements of LLP Policy H5. On the other hand, the proposed balconies would satisfy Standard 26 of the London Mayor's Housing SPG¹, published in March 2016; indeed it appears that flats 2, 5 and 8 would provide double that requirement. The SPG is more recent than the LLP, and thus carries some weight. All the balconies would have good natural light and sunshine, reasonable privacy, and a good relationship to the units that they would serve. The appeal site clearly offers very limited opportunities for providing amenity space in any other way. On balance, the proposed balconies would offer a reasonable amount of amenity space in the circumstances, and the failure to accord with policy H5 on this particular point does not justify refusing permission in this case.
14. In two cases, units Nos 2 and 5, the proposed new flats would have windows facing in one direction only. LLP Policy H5, and Standard 29 of the SPG, make

¹ Supplementary Planning Guidance

- it clear that ideally, dual-aspect internal layouts are to be preferred. But both of these policies also recognise that this may not always be practical. Standard 29 in particular requires only that the number of single-aspect dwellings is kept to a minimum, and Policy H5 allows for exceptions where justified by the particular circumstances. In the appeal scheme, the constraints of the existing building pose particular design challenges that are not typical of most housing schemes, but even so, six out of the eight flats would have openings in the north elevation as well as the south. Whilst some of these would be roof lights rather than windows, they would allow for a reasonably good level of natural ventilation. I find no conflict with either Policy H5 or the SPG in this respect.
15. Standard 31 of the SPG seeks to encourage ceiling heights of 2.5m, throughout 75% of the gross internal area of each dwelling. A similar requirement is proposed in the 'Intend to Publish' version of the emerging draft London Plan, dated December 2019. In the appeal scheme, the ceiling heights of the new residential units would fall short of this requirement. I recognise that higher ceilings are a potential way of enhancing the internal environment, especially in higher-density situations. But nevertheless, in this case the proposed design provides for ceiling heights of 2.4m throughout, thus exceeding the 2.3m which is required at national level². Given the constraints involved in converting and extending the existing building, I consider that this represents a reasonable compromise. To my mind, the failure to fully meet the SPG standard, or that of the emerging policy, would not result in unacceptable living conditions in this case.
 16. With regard to the transmission of noise within the appeal building, the appellants' acoustic report contains detailed proposals for the measures needed to insulate the internal party wall and new first floor structure, to provide attenuation for the new residential units. I appreciate that the Council still has concerns, particularly with regard to the lower frequency elements of amplified music, the potential for vibration, and also the lack of provision for alternative means of ventilation. But the Council's appeal statement also contains details of possible further mitigation measures suggested by the Noise Pollution Officer, and I note that a condition is proposed which would require the approval of further details in this regard. I see no reason why such a condition should not be capable of securing an acceptable detailed solution to the noise transmission issues.
 17. In most of these respects therefore, I consider that the proposed residential flats would be capable of providing a satisfactory living environment. However, the exception is with regard to the severely limited external outlook available, affecting the main living spaces of all the units, and in some cases all other habitable rooms, as well as the balconies. This shortcoming would mean that acceptable living conditions overall would not be achieved. The conflict with LLP Policy Q2 in this respect again carries substantial weight.

Effects on the Conservation Area

18. The Wandsworth Road CA comprises a 1km length of Wandsworth Road, a typical inner-London high street, characterised mainly by 2- and 3-storey shops, houses and commercial buildings dating from the mid-19th to early 20th centuries. From my observations, its significance appears to derive mainly

² The Nationally Described Space Standards (DCLG, March 2015), para 10 (i)

from the consistency in the age of many of the buildings, and from common elements in their architectural style and layout.

19. Having said this, the streetscape is by no means uniform. On the north side, some substantial sections of the frontage have been redeveloped with post-war housing estates, and the CA boundary is drawn to exclude these. On the southern side, the frontage is punctuated at intervals by individual replacement buildings, mostly of contrasting styles, including some of rather indifferent quality. Even within the Victorian and Edwardian buildings, there is a range of variation in heights, roof styles, fenestration, and materials. Directly opposite the appeal site is a Premier Inn, of which the front section is an unusually ornate, early-20th century building with a roof featuring a central dome and two swept gables.
20. The Clapham Baptist Church fronts directly onto the southern side of Wandsworth Road, with a return frontage to Victoria Rise. The western section, formerly a Sunday School, appears late Victorian. Its arched windows and upper-floor brick detailing are attractive features, but some of these have been lost or replaced. The very shallow-pitched roof on this part of the building, although apparently original, appears incongruous between the more conventional steeper roofs on either side. The two later brick porches, fronting onto Wandsworth Road, are somewhat rudimentary, and detract from this main elevation. The eastern part of the building, built in the 1950s, is restrained and respectful in its style, but is nonetheless a somewhat lifeless design, apart from the Victoria Rise elevation, with its canopied main entrance and large circular window above. Overall, whilst the building has some positive attributes, in my view its present contribution to the CA is no more than neutral.
21. The new roof now proposed for the western section would be taller than the existing, and its mansard shape would not match the more traditional roof forms that predominate. However, the new ridge height would be in keeping with those on either side, the existing eaves line would be maintained, and the flat topped rear section would not be readily visible. The arched dormers would be relatively small, and would echo the style of the existing windows below. The copper cladding would be a high-quality material, which after weathering should form an attractive patina. All in all, it seems to me that this proposed addition to the roof would be a well-proportioned and well-mannered design, worthy of the CA.
22. Below this, on the Wandsworth Road elevation, the proposed alterations to the church's secondary entrance would involve a substantial amount of glazing, but this would be contained between the existing brick piers, reinforcing the building's architectural rhythm. The new entrance to serve the residential apartments would be subservient to this, but would relate well in terms of its style, scale and juxtaposition. The doorways for the cycle and refuse stores would be simple and functional, but would respect the pattern of the fenestration above. To my mind the hierarchy of these different openings would be legible and coherent. The removal of the existing unsightly porches and rather forbidding entrance doors would be a significant benefit. As a whole, the proposed changes to this main elevation would present a more welcoming face to the CA, and allow the building to contribute more actively to the street scene.

23. On the rear, the proposed balconies would replace a rather unsightly metal fire escape. To this extent, their translucent and lightweight nature would be more sympathetic than the existing feature. In any event, this elevation is not visible from the public realm. Notwithstanding the balconies' adverse impact in relation to adjoining properties, which I have identified above, in other respects they would be acceptable in design terms and would not harm the building itself or the CA.
24. Overall, I consider that the proposed additions and alterations would add up to a well-considered and high-quality design, preserving the character and appearance of the Wandsworth Road CA. As such, the development would respect and reinforce the CA's positive characteristics, adding to the area's distinctiveness and design quality, and responding positively to the host building, as required by LLP Policies Q5, Q8, Q11 and Q22.

Housing size mix

25. LLP Policy H4 seeks, amongst other things, a balanced mix of units sizes in all developments, to include some family-sized homes with 3 bedrooms or more. This approach is supported by London Plan Policy 3.8 which encourages Boroughs to ensure a choice of housing sizes, including accommodation for families. The present appeal scheme would comprise a mixture of studio units and one- and two-bedroomed apartment, but no larger units.
26. However, the LLP's supporting text at paragraph 5.21 acknowledges that the Council's preferred mix may not be appropriate in all cases, depending on the individual site's location, constraints and other circumstances. In the case of the appeal site, for the reasons already discussed, it would not be possible to provide any form of outdoor amenity space other than balconies. All the proposed units would be on upper floors, and accessible only by stairs. The location is within a busy district centre. The nearest public open space appears to be Clapham Common, which is some distance away, and involves crossing a major road. The site would therefore not provide a safe or convenient location for young children. This would not rule out families whose offspring are of teen age or older. But on the whole, the location is clearly more suited to the needs of single people or couples without children.
27. I appreciate that the need for family housing is identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), dated October 2017, and that the need has grown over the years, exacerbated by the conversion of many larger houses to flats. But the scale on which that process has occurred seems to me to demonstrate that a high demand exists for smaller units too. It appears not to be disputed that units of the sizes now proposed would all help to meet at least some element of the Borough's current and future needs, thus relieving some of the pressure for further subdivision of existing properties. In any event, even though the appeal scheme would not provide any larger units, it would offer a range of different sizes of smaller units, and to that extent would contribute to Policy H4's main aim of securing a balanced provision.
28. In the circumstances, I conclude that the departure from Policy H4 in respect of family-sized housing is justified, by the particular nature of the site and its location. Having regard to the context provided by paragraph 5.21, and the LLP as a whole, it seems to me that there would be no material conflict with that policy's aims for the creation and maintenance of sustainable, balanced communities.

Affordable housing

29. LLP Policy H2(a)(ii) sets out the Council's requirements as to affordable housing. On sites of fewer than 10 dwellings, the requirement will be dealt with by a financial contribution towards off-site provision. On larger sites, the requirement will be for on-site provision, at a rate of either 40% or 50%, depending on whether any public subsidy is involved.
30. In the present appeal scheme, it is stated that the proposed residential units would be controlled by the Church Trustees, through a body to be known as the Victoria Rise Community Housing Group. Units would be offered for rent to members of a 'rental club', who would be aged under 35 at the start of their tenancy, and subject to a maximum income threshold. Lettings would be for a term of up to five years, and rents would be set below market levels, whilst still providing a return to support the Church's charitable mission.
31. In principle, it seems to me that these arrangements would be capable of qualifying as on-site affordable housing. In that case, as long as at least 40% of the units were secured as such, on detailed terms that broadly matched the definition of affordable housing in the NPPF³, then Policy H2(a)(ii) would be complied with. However, no legal obligation has been entered into, and thus the arrangements referred to could not be enforced. On this basis, the appeal proposal fails to comply with this important LLP policy.
32. But be that as it may, in May 2016 the Court of Appeal upheld the Secretary of State's (SoS's) Written Ministerial Statement dated November 2014, which sought to exempt small sites from affordable housing policies. Then, in July 2018, a similar policy was incorporated in the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF), in which paragraph 63 reaffirms that affordable housing should no longer be sought for residential developments that are not major developments. The appeal proposal is not a major development, and therefore is clearly one to which NPPF paragraph 63 applies.
33. Alongside this, the NPPF also contains paragraph 213, which requires that development plan policies which pre-date national policy should be given due weight, according to their degree of consistency with national policies. Although the NPPF is not part of the development plan, it is an important material consideration, and the weight to be afforded to it is a matter of judgement, taking into account all the circumstances.
34. In the light of the introduction of paragraph 63, it seems to me that Policy H2(a)(ii) is now clearly out of date and inconsistent with current national policy. This is because the LLP policy does not reflect or take account of the change that has occurred in the NPPF in relation to affordable housing requirements on small sites. In these circumstances, the effect of paragraph 213 is that the weight given to Policy H2(a)(ii) should now be reduced, relative to paragraph 63, unless the Council is able to show clear reasons to the contrary.
35. On the evidence of the 2017 SHMA, the cost of housing in Lambeth is high, with many households spending a large proportion of their incomes on it, and there is a high level of need for affordable housing. This affordable housing need includes an accumulated backlog as well as new households and other

³ NPPF Annex 2: Glossary

newly arising needs. Even though this evidence is now three years old, I have no reason to doubt that it is still relevant to the current situation.

36. But nonetheless, there is force in the appellant's counter-argument. The fact that many areas of the country have high housing costs, and high levels of affordable housing need, could not have been unknown to the SoS at the time when paragraph 63 was introduced. Indeed, alongside that paragraph, the 2018 revision of the NPPF also contained others, such as paragraphs 61, 62 and 64, which explicitly acknowledge the need for affordable housing policies. I therefore find myself in agreement with the appellant that the inclusion of paragraph 63 indicates that, in the case of small sites, the need for affordable housing was considered to be outweighed by other factors, such as the need to support smaller construction firms, and the desirability of increasing choice in the housing market.
37. This being so, the fact that the Council is able to demonstrate a high level of local housing need is not in itself conclusive. Rather, it would be necessary to show that the needs in Lambeth were so exceptional as to justify reversing the order of priorities that the NPPF implicitly assigns, in the case of small sites, to these competing policy aims. The evidence before me shows that the housing problems faced by Lambeth are substantial, but not that they are exceptional. For that reason, I find no basis on which to conclude that Policy H2(a)(ii) should prevail over the clear change in national policy embodied in NPPF paragraph 63.
38. The Council has also produced evidence that between 2009-17, small sites made up around 19% of all new housing in Lambeth. I have no reason to doubt that the same pattern is likely to have continued since then. But again, there is no comparative evidence that could show whether this proportion is in any way unusual. For the same reasons as above, the figures presented do not support setting aside the weight that attaches to NPPF paragraph 63, as the most up-to-date expression of national policy on affordable housing and small sites.
39. I note the various appeal decisions referred to by both parties, in which inspectors have come to different conclusions on this matter. I acknowledge that a number of these favour the arguments now advanced by the Council. But I must judge this appeal on the evidence and submissions that are before me, and in this case these lead me to the conclusions explained above.
40. I conclude that, although the appellant has failed to enter a legally binding commitment to the provision of any policy-compliant affordable housing, in this case LLP Policy H2(a)(ii) is outweighed by NPPF paragraph 63. Consequently, the conflict with the LLP policy in this respect does not amount to a justifiable reason for refusing planning permission.

Protection of community facilities

41. Policy S1 of the Lambeth Local Plan (the LLP), adopted in September 2015, supports making effective use of community premises to address the Borough's changing needs and priorities. Existing facilities are to be safeguarded, except in certain circumstances, including where replacement facilities are to be provided, of the same or better size and quality.
42. In its existing form, the eastern section of the building accommodates the main church sanctuary area, which is a large, double-height space designed for

church services. A small mezzanine floor above part of this area is used as a church office. In the western section, there are a variety of meeting rooms, on both the ground and first floors. On my visit, it was evident that the sanctuary area's sloping floor and fixed pews limit the potential of that area for any other uses. I also saw that the layout of the western area, with its multitude of stairways, circulation and service areas, represents an inefficient use of that space. In general it was also clear that the building's facilities and interior are dated and in need of upgrading.

43. The development now proposed would remove part of the existing meeting and activity space by incorporating it into the proposed new apartments. But the levelling of the sanctuary floor, and the introduction of demountable seating, would allow this part of the building to be used for a wider range of events and activities. To my mind there can be little doubt that the ability to make better use of this large space, throughout the week, would represent a significant gain. In addition, two new, reasonably-sized and sub-divisible smaller halls would be created, in the remainder of the ground floor, and in an enlarged eastern mezzanine.
44. The appellants state that this reconfiguration would enable them to provide for musical and theatre performances, conferences, family events, dance and fitness activities, counselling groups, youth clubs, study groups, and a night shelter service. I see no reason to doubt the need or demand for these activities, or the Church's ability to run them. With regard to the Council's concerns regarding noise transmission, given the conclusion that I have already reached on that issue, it seems unlikely that any of the new space would be rendered unusable due to conflicts of this nature.
45. Based purely on floorspace, the Class D1 space available for community use would be reduced. But in my view that approach rather misses the point. What Policy S1 is designed primarily to achieve is that community facilities are retained, and are able to be used effectively, and to adapt to changing needs. In the present case, the proposed development would retain the existing church and community uses. It would also provide higher-quality, more flexible and more modern space, enabling a wider range of activities and more efficient utilisation. And in addition, the scheme as a whole would help to generate funds for the church, to enable it to adapt and upgrade, and thus to continue to provide the kind of community services that are now required. Having regard to the policy as a whole, and its aims, it seems to me that these aspects of the proposed development are more significant than the amount of floorspace.
46. Viewed in the round, I am satisfied that the development now proposed would fully safeguard the existing community use. As such, it would properly reflect and respond to the aims of Policy S1, and would thus accord with that policy.

Cycle parking

47. Based on the London Plan's cycle parking standards, the eight new residential units would require 13 cycle spaces. The proposed scheme would provide two areas for cycles, one in an internal cycle storeroom at the western end of the building, with its own access door onto Wandsworth Road, and the other in an external cycle rack adjacent to the Victoria Rise entrance. In total it is suggested that these could accommodate 14 bicycles.

48. I appreciate the Council's concerns with regard to the proposed external rack. Given the lack of detail on this particular point, it has not been demonstrated precisely how many cycles could be accommodated in this location, or by what means. But there is clearly enough space for a reasonable number. If there were a marginal shortfall, to my mind that would be likely to be acceptable, given the nature of the particular development, and its potential benefits. I accept that some of the cycle storage might have to be by way of vertical hangers. But given the intended age range of the occupiers, this seems unlikely to be a major problem for most users, provided that a horizontal format was used for at least some of the spaces.
49. The effects on the CA would clearly have to be taken into account. But the proposed position for the external cycle rack is enclosed behind an existing wall and shrubs, and surrounded by an assortment of bus shelters, road signs, lighting columns, utility cabinets, and gritting bins. The cycle store itself would be a relatively small structure, not dissimilar from these other items of street furniture. In this context, it seems likely that a design could be found which would not be unduly harmful.
50. At most, the two cycle stores would meet the needs of the proposed residential units, and no provision would be made for staff or users of the church itself. However, as an existing facility, it would not be reasonable to insist on such provision, especially where the nature of the site makes that prospect impractical and unrealistic.
51. I conclude that the details of the proposed cycle storage are a matter that could be adequately dealt with by way of a condition. In this respect I find no significant conflict with any of the main relevant policies, including Policies Q13, T1 and T3 of the LLP, or Policy 6.9 of the London Plan.

Car parking

52. The site is located in an area of good public transport accessibility, with a PTAL rating of 4. In such areas, car-free developments are encouraged by LLP Policy T7. The appeal proposal would not provide any car parking, and to this extent would comply with relevant policy requirements.
53. In addition, the parties are agreed that a legal agreement should be entered into, to ensure that future occupiers would not be eligible for parking permits within the surrounding area, and to provide membership of a local car club. However, on the evidence currently before me, it does not appear that the intended agreement has yet been entered into.
54. Without such an agreement, or other obligation, the development would have the potential to add to the demand for on-street parking within the adjacent controlled parking zone, where the Council seeks to minimise parking stress. This would appear to be contrary to the aims behind Policy T7 and other relevant LLP policies, including H6 and T6.
55. In the absence of any other evidence, I conclude that the proposed development would be likely to increase the demand for on-street parking in the area, with a consequent adverse impact on parking conditions for other residents, contrary to the aims of the policies that I have identified.

Conclusions

56. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers, by reason of the overbearing visual effect of the proposed balcony screens. In addition, the development would also fail to provide acceptable living conditions for its own occupiers, by reason of the impact of those same screens on the outlook from habitable rooms within the new units. In both of these respects, the development would conflict with LLP Policy Q2. The harm to existing and future residential occupiers carries substantial weight.
57. In addition to these, the development would fail to avoid adding to the demand for on-street car parking, contrary to the aims of Policies H6, T6 and T7. Moderate weight attaches to this additional harm, adding to the overall weight of the considerations counting against the development.
58. Weighing in favour of the development are the fact that it would provide eight residential units in a highly sustainable location, and it would provide an improved and upgraded community facility. I have not upheld the Council's other objections, on grounds relating to the design, housing mix, affordable housing, or cycle provision, but in all these respects, the impact of the development would be merely neutral.
59. In the overall balance, the proposed scheme's benefits would not outweigh the harm that I have identified, or the resulting conflicts with the development plan.
60. I have taken account of all the other matters raised, but none changes or outweighs these conclusions. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

J Felgate

INSPECTOR