



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 9 November 2020

by A Parkin BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3255089
4 Church Road, Northwood HA6 1AS

- 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 Ms Annamaria Porterfield against the decision of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 75425/APP/2020/650, dated 24 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is the installation of a drop kerb to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal proposal concerns a dropped kerb on the edge of the Church Road carriageway, with an associated vehicular crossover on the adjacent grass verge and the footpath next to No 4.
3. The site edged red location plan submitted with the planning application does not include the land where the proposed dropped kerb or crossover would be. Furthermore, as a result it does not appear that the highway authority was correctly notified of the proposal at the time the planning application was made.
4. I sought the views of the appellant and the Council on this matter and suggested that the most expedient approach might be for the appeal to be withdrawn and for a fresh planning application to be made to the Council.
5. The Council accepted that the site edged red did not include the development proposal and considered that this would prejudice its ability to control the proper construction of the dropped kerb. The Council also considered that the appeal should be withdrawn and a fresh planning application submitted. These comments were shared with the appellant, but no response has been received in relation to them, or my original enquiry.
6. This is an unfortunate situation. However, the appeal must be determined on the basis of the submitted evidence, with appropriate regard to the development plan and material considerations.

Main Issues

7. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and, on highway and pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

8. 4 Church Road is a traditional, 2-storey, semi-detached dwelling, with a small front garden area that has been hard-surfaced. Other than the footpath and garden being constructed of different materials, there is no physical demarcation between them.
9. No 4 is located on the eastern side of Church Road, a two-way street through a predominantly residential area, which is part of the Old Northwood Area of Special Local Character (ASLC). There are footpaths on both sides of the carriageway, and on the eastern side a grass verge next to the kerbline.
10. There are a number of trees planted within this grass verge, most of which are mature specimens. Many of the dwellings on both sides of Church Road have dropped kerb accesses and on the eastern side of the road, the grass verge contains numerous hard-surfaced crossovers, including at the two dwellings on either side of the appeal property.
11. At the time of my visit, a car was parked on the hard-surfaced front garden area of No 4, despite there being no dropped kerb or formal crossover. This informal arrangement has damaged the grass verge in the area where the proposed crossover would be positioned.
12. Close to this informal crossover is a mature tree, the trunk of which has been damaged at some point in the past. The root plate of the tree is likely to have suffered compaction as a result of vehicles using the informal crossover and the Council has indicated that the damaged tree is to be removed at some stage in the future.
13. The extent of the proposed dropped kerb and crossover would be similar to others on Church Road and would retain significant parts of the grass verge to the front of the property. As such it would not be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.
14. However, the proposed crossover would be outside the site edged red and no details of the materials to be used in its construction have been provided. Without such details I cannot be certain that the proposal would not harm the significance of the Old Northwood ASLC. With reference to the Council's concerns, I am not satisfied that the proposal could be adequately controlled by way of a planning condition.
15. For these reasons the proposed development would detract from the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would conflict with Policies BE1 (Built Environment) and HE1 (Heritage) of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies November 2012 and with Policies DMHB1 (Heritage Assets), DMHB5 (Areas of Special Local Character), DMHB11 (Design of New Development) and DMHB12 (Streets and Public Realm) of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies January 2020 (HLP2DMP).
16. Policy DMHD1 (Alterations and Extensions to Residential Dwellings) of the HLP2DMP is not relevant to the proposal.

Highway and pedestrian safety

17. The proposed crossover would be somewhat narrower than the 2.4m width that would accord with the Council's guidelines. However, the 2.3m width by the footway would not be significantly below the required width and I note the proposal would be 2.7m wide by the kerb.
18. A zebra crossing is located a short distance to the south of the appeal site, but the Council has raised no concerns in relation to the impact of the proposal on the crossing. Furthermore, no compelling evidence has been provided to show that the proposed dropped kerb and crossover would be harmful to highway or pedestrian safety in the area.
19. However, the proposed crossover would be outside the site edged red and no details of the materials to be used in its construction have been provided. Without such details I cannot be certain that the proposal would not be detrimental to the safe functioning of the highway. With reference to the Council's concerns, I am not satisfied that the proposal could be adequately controlled by way of a planning condition.
20. For these reasons the proposed development would detract from highway and pedestrian safety in the area. Consequently, it would conflict with Policy DMT2 (Highways Impacts) of the HLP2DMP.

Other Matters

21. The Council refers to a proposal for a vehicular crossover at 16 Church Road that was refused planning permission and subsequently dismissed at appeal. Very few details of this proposal or the appeal decision are before me. I am not, therefore, familiar with this matter and in any event, each proposal should be considered on its individual merits. This matter has had no bearing on my Decision.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Parkin

INSPECTOR