
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2020

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3249121
107 Station Road, West Drayton UB7 7LT

- 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 I Phull against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 1036/APP/2019/3250, dated 1 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is addition of a second floor and a first floor/second floor side/rear extension to provide 2 x studio, 2 x 1-bed and 2 x 2-bed self contained flats, with associated parking, cycle and refuse store and balcony amenity space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of the development in reaching my decision as it more fully describes the details of the development than that given on the original planning application form. The appellant's appeal form also makes reference to the updated description.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on
 - (i) the character and appearance of the host property, adjoining terrace and the area;
 - (ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at No. 109 Station Road with particular regard to privacy and outlook; and
 - (iii) the living conditions of the future occupiers of the proposed residential units with particular regard to standard of accommodation and private outdoor amenity space.

Reasons

4. The appeal property at No. 107 Station Road (No. 107) is an end of terrace two-storey building with basement with a commercial use at ground floor level and residential use above. The neighbouring properties comprise of a short traditional terrace of commercial uses with residential uses at the upper levels located close to the junction of Station Road and Brandville Road.

5. The appeal site is surrounded by a range of two and three storey residential and commercial properties of varying designs and style to the north, south and east and a surface level public car park to the west of the site. The immediate area is mixed use in nature and does not have a clearly defined architectural character. No. 107 being situated on an end plot has even more expansive grounds, which add to the open character and appearance of the street scene, which is further enhanced by the presence of mature established trees along the road frontage of the adjacent car park and on the opposite side of the road.
6. The proposal would involve the construction of a second floor extension over the mixed use building and a three storey side/rear extension to create 6 no. residential units with associated balconies, parking, cycle and refuse store. The contemporary style building would be set back and staggered at an angle from the side and rear boundaries of the site. The external finish of the building would be predominantly constructed with a rendered finish and timber cladding at second floor level under a flat roof.
7. The existing character of the site would change significantly as a result of the redevelopment of the building. A change in the nature of the site would be an inevitable consequence of this. The Council has not raised concerns in relation to the principle of development in this location. Rather, it considers the specifics of the scheme to be inappropriate. The proposed extended building would have a comparable height to the adjacent properties and the presence of taller three storey buildings are a common place feature within the immediate vicinity. An additional example would not necessarily be harmful in principle.
8. Variety does not necessarily lead to harm. Whilst the contemporary style design of the extended building has some merits, the detailed design and appearance of the appeal scheme would be very much at odds with the older more traditional scale, form and appearance of the host building. As such, although it would be set back from the side and rear boundaries of the site, by virtue of its overall scale, form and design, it would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from the architectural integrity of the host building and the adjoining terrace.
9. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Station Road and from the adjacent public car park and access road. The position of the extended building in close proximity to the boundaries, would provide limited opportunity to soften the impact of development through a comprehensive landscaping scheme. The contrasting use of materials contribute to the overall scale of the building, giving it particular prominence in relation to its surroundings. As such, I consider that the proposed development would result in incongruous and out-of-keeping additions that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property, adjoining terrace and the area.
10. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the site layout and the design of the development has been carefully considered in order to minimise any impacts on the host property, adjoining terrace and the area and would be in keeping with the other properties in the area. Whilst I recognise there is some variation in building styles in the area and the use of matching materials, fenestrations and boundary treatment would assist with integrating the proposal with the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects

outlined above. As such, I consider the proposal would adversely harm rather than positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

11. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would adversely harm the character and appearance of the host property, adjoining terrace and the area. It would be contrary to the overall design aims of Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies DMHB11 and DMHB12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies (January 2020) (HLPP2). These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals, including extensions, alterations and new buildings, will be of a high standard of design that should be well integrated with the character and quality of the surrounding area; harmonise with the local context and adjacent structures; and make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of layout, form, scale and materials.

Living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property

12. The proposed development would be located adjacent to the rear elevation of the adjoining terraced property at No. 109 Station Road (No. 109). The proposal would be set back at an angle from the side boundary with No. 109 and is separated from the rooms and external amenity area at the rear of the adjacent property by a fence running between the properties.
13. Whilst I accept that there is some impact from the development, given the overall height and design of the development, set back, together with the separation distance between the properties and the boundary treatment, I do not consider that the development would result in significant harm to the privacy to the main habitable rooms and amenity area at the rear of No. 109, nor significantly dominate the views to cause an overbearing effect and an unacceptable sense of enclosure at the rear of the adjacent property.
14. The neighbouring property is already overlooked from the existing windows, external staircase and yard area at the rear of No. 107 and from the public highway and footpath running along the rear of the site to the adjacent public car park. As such, I consider the relationship between the proposed development and the adjacent property would not be significantly different to the existing situation on the site and would not warrant dismissal of the appeal on these grounds.
15. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at No. 109 Station Road with particular regard to privacy and outlook. It would be consistent with Policies DMHB11 and DMHD1 of the HLPP2. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that all developments, including extensions, provide the highest standards of design, a satisfactory relationship with adjacent properties and do not adversely impact on the amenity, light and outlook of adjacent properties.

Living conditions of the future occupiers

16. HLPP2 Policy DMHB16 sets out that all new housing developments are required to comply with the internal space standards in accordance with the

Government's National Described Technical Housing Standards¹, including access to bathroom/shower room and sanitary facilities. This is reinforced in Policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2016, the Housing Standards Minor Alterations to the London Plan 2016 and the Mayor of London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance March 2016.

17. In this case, Flats B & E do not provide bathroom/WC facilities. However, the appellant's submissions indicate that these facilities were omitted in error on the original submitted drawings and a revised drawing has been submitted to show these facilities. If I had been minded to allow the appeal, then this could have been dealt with through an appropriate planning condition to ensure adequate access to bathroom/WC facilities.
18. In relation to private outdoor amenity space, the Council requires a good quality and usable private outdoor amenity space with a recommended minimum area of 20 sqm for a studio and 1 bedroom flat and 25 sqm for a 2 bedroom flat in line with the standards set out in Table 5.3 under HLPP2 Policy DMHB 18. In this case, two small communal outdoor amenity areas are provided and each flat has a balcony.
19. The appellant has stated that the private outdoor amenity space, including the balconies provided for each of the flats, are considered appropriate for this type of development in this location. However, the proposed development would not meet the minimum recommended space standards. The future occupants would need sufficient space to carry out leisure and household activities such as hanging out their washing if they wish, particularly during the summer months. I consider that the users of the communal outdoor amenity spaces at the side and rear of the development would experience an enclosed environment, lacking in quality as usable, private external amenity space.
20. In the absence of adequate private external amenity space within the development, the balconies and communal outdoor amenity areas provided would not be viable options in this case. I therefore consider that the proposal would result in a poor quality living environment and would not provide satisfactory private external amenity space for the future occupants of the proposed residential units in this particular case.
21. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the living conditions of the future occupiers of the proposed residential units with particular regard to private outdoor amenity space. The development would be contrary to the overall amenity aims of Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 18 of the HLPP2 which seeks to ensure that new housing developments provide the highest standards of design with good quality and usable private outdoor amenity space for the enjoyment of the occupiers.

Other Matters

22. I have noted the appellant's comments regarding the additional residential accommodation and flats that could be constructed on the site under latest changes to the General Permitted Development Rights. Whilst this may be so, this does not set a precedent for such an inappropriate development in this location for the reasons set out above.

¹ Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Technical Housing Standards – Nationally described space standards (March 2015)

23. I have considered the various benefits put forward by the appellant that the proposal would bring, including the scheme's design, providing additional residential accommodation that contributes to the local housing needs of the area, making efficient use of the building and site in a highly accessible location. However, the adverse harm outlined above would, in my view, outweighs the benefits identified in this case. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

24. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR