



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2020

by Jonathon Parsons MSc BSc(Hons) DipTP Cert(Urb) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3254548
549 Uxbridge Road, Hayes UB4 8HP

- 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 R Purewall against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 57783/APP/2020/24, dated 6 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is an existing house to be replaced with 2 Nos one bedroom and 3 two bedroom flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on (a) the character and appearance of the area and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of the proposed flats, having regard to light and outlook, and the neighbouring flats at 551 Uxbridge Road, having regard to vehicular noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey detached dwelling on Uxbridge Road which is opposite a public park. It has a drive to the front and a garden to the rear with sheds and greenhouse structures. On this side of Uxbridge Road, there is a variety of dwelling forms, types and designs which gives the area a variable visual quality, and a mixed residential character and appearance.
4. The existing dwelling would be replaced with a two to three storey building which would comprise 5 flats. The ridge and eaves height of the new building would be lower and the same respectively as that of the existing dwelling building. The ridge and eaves height of the building would be lower than recent flatted developments, either side of the appeal site on Uxbridge Road.
5. To the front, there would be a prominent flat frontage with a gable at the second floor which would also be present to the rear. However, the rear would also have a mono-pitch roof above the first floor with hipped ends and a hipped pitched roof with a flat roofed element above the ground floor. On the building's flank adjacent to the access drive, there would be an overhang at first floor creating a veranda type space and second floor windows straddling

either side of the roof eaves. The other flank would have two flat-roofed dormers. Externally there would be a range of differently sized and designed windows and finishes, including render, brick and some timber panelling between windows.

6. The new building takes design cues from developments within the vicinity but in combination, its assemblage of so many differing architectural features and forms would result in an incoherently designed building. The building would also have a distinct elongated form which would be close to a common boundary. There would be hard surfaced areas for vehicular access, manoeuvring and parking around the front and rear of the building. Even with the context of new development in the area, the extent of built form, including the hard surfaced areas, would cover an excessive part of the front of the site. Consequently, this would result in a strong impression of the design being led by the desire to fit the proposed number of flats rather than to fit in with the site and its context. As a result, it would have a contrived appearance adversely affecting the street scene and would not be appropriate innovation or change.
7. Along Uxbridge Road, developments are characterised by differing designs, styles, height, sizes and scales. There are flatted blocks at Neville Court and Marsh Court, a modern asymmetrical fronted development at Kingswood Place and a white rendered/grey roofed development at 541 Uxbridge Road. However, each of these developments have its own individualistic design style with generally consistent use of associated architectural features and forms.
8. This difference is material in distinguishing these developments from the appeal proposal before me and additionally other developments at land to the rear of Crescent Parade, West Way Chapel, 1380 Uxbridge Road, 107 West Drayton Road, 535 Uxbridge Road and 579-583 Uxbridge Road. Furthermore, many of these developments are also not in the vicinity of the appeal site at Uxbridge Road and within different contexts. At West Way Chapel, the elongated flatted building with side access was adjacent to a church car park. At 1380 Uxbridge Road and West Drayton Road, developments are sited between roads, at or close to the corners of roads. Except for the West Way scheme, the development sites are also larger. For all these reasons, these developments would not set a precedent for this development. Furthermore, every proposal has to be considered on its particular planning merits as has been done so here, where it has been found not to harmonise with local context due to its disjointed design.
9. For all these reasons, the development would not be of a highest standard and context and would harm the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One Strategic Policies (SP) 2012 and Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two Development Management Policies (DMP) 2020 and Policies 3.5 and 7.4 of the London Plan (LP) (2016).

Living conditions

10. The flank of the new building would face the dwelling at 547 Uxbridge Road. There would be a gap between the two buildings but at the ground floor, the lounge/dining rooms of the two flats would be served solely by windows facing onto the common boundary. Here, boundary treatment would be in close proximity and thus, they would significantly affect light and outlook. For the

other flank elevation, there would be a significant gap with the neighbouring dwelling at 551 Uxbridge Road and thus, there would be no significant effect on light and outlook.

11. There would be vehicle access and manoeuvring areas alongside the common boundary with 551 Uxbridge Road. There is noise and disturbance from traffic along Uxbridge Road, the wider area has commercial uses and many properties have access drives to the rear. Vehicles would drive slowly down the access drive. However, the drive and manoeuvring area would serve 4 flats and would be in very close proximity to the common boundary with No 551 and beyond this, private outdoor spaces. Given this, it has not been demonstrated that significant noise and disturbance would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the flats.
12. For all these reasons, there would be harm to the living conditions of the future occupiers of the flats, having regard to outlook and light, and the existing occupiers of 551 Uxbridge Road, having regard to vehicular noise and disturbance. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Policy DMHB 11 of the DMP and Policies 3.5 and 5.3 of the LP.

Other considerations

13. The development would boost housing making an effective use of land where there is a pressing need for housing. LP Policies identify a pressing need for more homes in London and that a genuine choice of new housing of the highest quality and of varying sizes and tenures should be supported. Development should optimise the potential of sites by increasing density. The dwellings would be designed with renewable and energy saving features. Residents of the flats would have good access to services and facilities, including public transport. Such considerations weigh in favour of the proposal.
14. However, the development would not result in a well-designed place because it would not be visually attractive as result of good architecture or sympathetic to local character. It would not create a place which promotes health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for future users. The net contribution of four flats to housing supply would be relatively small and there is no evidence to show the type of housing need within the area. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Consequently, the adverse design impact would outweigh the benefits of the proposal.

Conclusion

15. The harm to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of existing future residents would be significant and permanent. For all the reasons indicated, the harm to respective design and amenity SP, DMP and LP policies would be overriding, and the proposal would be contrary to the development plan taken as a whole. Similarly, there are no material considerations to outweigh that finding and therefore, planning permission should be refused. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathon Parsons

INSPECTOR