
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2021 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/20/3254845

Land Between 17 & 21 Melville Road, Rainham RM13 9TY

- 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 J Knowlden against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0277.20, dated 19 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage and construction of new 1-bedroom 2-storey dwelling and associated development.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeals Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. The current proposal follows a previous application¹ for a two-bedroom detached dwelling on the same site which was refused planning permission and dismissed at appeal² in 2016.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on highway safety relating to the amount of off-road car parking.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site is currently occupied by a small detached garage located between two semi-detached, two-storey dwellings. The surrounding area is

¹ P0532.15

² APP/B5480/W/15/3132642 (the previous appeal proposal)

residential in nature and comprised of a variety of dwelling types and designs including terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings. The proposal would replace the existing garage outbuilding with a two-storey, one-bedroom dwelling.

6. There is a variety of properties on Melville Road, including other two-storey detached dwellings. However, the appeal site and hence the proposed dwelling is narrower than other detached properties in the area and more akin in size to a site occupied by a terraced property, such as those opposite the appeal site. The proposed dwelling would largely cover the entire width of the plot resulting in a detached property which would appear cramped within the narrow constraints of the site. Although existing development in the street is relatively compact, the current first floor gap between No.17 and No.21 has a positive impact on the streetscene and the shoe-horned appearance of the proposal would be contrary to the pattern of development within the area and an incongruous addition to the overall streetscene. Compared to the previous appeal proposal, the building has been set further forward on the plot, following a similar building line to other properties within the streetscene. However, this would not overcome concerns regarding the narrow size of the plot which were also raised by the Inspector in the previous appeal proposal.
7. It is noted that the appellant has highlighted a similarly designed detached property also on Melville Road. However, although the width of this dwelling would be similar to the appeal proposal, the existing dwelling has an attached garage and therefore appears more spacious within the streetscene. Likewise, the narrow terraced properties highlighted by the appellant are not comparable to the detached appeal property before me.
8. Consequently, for the reasons above, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and would be contrary to Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan (2016) and Policy DC61 of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2008). These policies collectively require new development to be of a high quality design with a proportion that appropriately defines the public realm and responds to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development.

Highway Safety

9. The proposed development would result in the loss of two off-road parking spaces within and to the front of the existing garage, although the appellant has confirmed that these parking spaces are not directly connected to any neighbouring dwellings and the site is currently used independently. The proposed dwelling would have only one-bedroom, reduced from two-bedrooms in the previous appeal proposal, and would not provide any off-road car parking spaces due to the constraints of the site. Although on-street parking is possible with a permit, it was noted during the site visit that spaces are limited as many surrounding properties also do not have any off-road parking provision and therefore are also reliant on these on-street spaces.
10. Although the site has a PTAL rating of 2, there are public transport facilities within close proximity to the site including Rainham train station and bus stops on Upminster Road South. The appellant has also stated that there would be space for bicycle storage on the site, which could be secured by condition. The proposal also includes the removal of the existing crossover to the site which

would provide one additional on-street parking space. Therefore, although the proposal would not provide off-road car parking, due the proximity to public transport, the provision of an additional on-street parking space and the limited size of the dwelling, the proposal would not result in a material increase in demand for on-street parking. As a result, it would not unduly harm highway safety or inconvenience to local residents.

11. Although this is different to the findings of the Inspector on the previous appeal proposal, I am satisfied that the differences I have highlighted between the schemes are sufficient for me to reach a different conclusion.
12. Therefore, for the reasons above, I conclude that the proposed development would not be to the detriment of highway safety and would not conflict with Policy DC33 which requires new development to demonstrate with regard to existing Controlled Parking Zones, that there is no adverse impact on the amenity of residents and the interests of the users of adjacent facilities.

Other Matters

13. In their appeal statement the Council has highlighted that the 2019 Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below the housing requirement over the previous three years and therefore paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') applies. Since that time the 2020 Housing Delivery Test has been published. However, I note that the latest result would not change that approach and paragraph 11(d) is still engaged. As the site is not within an area, or would affect an asset, of particular importance, paragraph 11(d)(i) is not relevant to the appeal before me. However, the test in paragraph 11(d)(ii) should be applied. This requires an assessment of the proposal against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
14. The Framework expects development to be visually attractive as a result of good layout whilst maintaining a strong sense of place using the arrangement of streets to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places. Even taking into account the objective of boosting the supply of housing and the Council's delivery of housing, the conflict between the proposal and Policies DC61 along with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 should therefore be given significant weight in this appeal.
15. The appellants comments that the proposal would comply with housing and amenity space standards are noted. However, these factors together with the lack of harm to highway safety I have found would be neutral in the planning balance.
16. Set against the harm identified there would be limited benefits associated with the proposal. An additional unit would make little difference to the overall delivery of housing, even if there is a demand for one bedroom properties in the area and the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply as alleged by the appellant. There would be some economic benefits during the construction of the dwelling and from the spending of future occupiers. As only one small dwelling is proposed these benefits would be limited. Consequently, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission, to the character and appearance of the area, would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the

Framework taken as a whole. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

Conclusions and Recommendation

17. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework which outweigh this. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Emma Worby

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR