The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 3 February 2021

by Rory MacLeod BA(Hons), MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/20/3262406
11 Fanshawe Road, Richmond, TW10 7XT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Saeed Fotoohi against the decision of Richmond Upon Thames London Borough Council.
- The application Ref 20/1682/OUT, dated 19 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2020.
- The development proposed is sub-division of rear garden, demolition of existing garage and construction of new house.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal relates to an outline application, with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. Illustrative drawings indicate the house's siting and massing at the end of the back garden with an access on to Beaufort Road and a first floor extending over a rear access track serving neighbouring houses.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are (a) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, (b) the adequacy of the parking arrangements in relation to highway safety and (c) the requirement for a contribution towards affordable housing.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. No.11 Fanshawe Road is an end of terrace house enlarged by side and rear extensions on a corner plot. The surrounding area is residential in character comprising mainly two storey terraced and semi-detached houses with higher flats on the opposite side of Beaufort Road.

5. The application form does not specify a floor area for the dwelling, but the appeal statement specifies an internal area of 93.55 sqm for a 3 bedroom house. A building of this size would fill a large part of the plot. The plans show the house set back from Beaufort Road with a two storey rear wall on the boundary to 9 Fanshawe Road leaving just enough land for a parking space in front. Whilst such a siting would align with the front and rear walls to 13 Beaufort Road, the adjacent house, the proposal would still appear cramped within its plot having no rear garden and just a small side garden providing little privacy from pedestrians on Beaufort Road.

6. The massing of the house could be similar to that of 13 Beaufort Road with a hipped roof provided to match neighbouring dwellings. Although design is not for determination at this stage, the indicated tunnel through the dwelling to maintain the rear access would result in a curious appearance, uncharacteristic of the area. An alternative siting would further reduce the size of the small garden. Nos. 13 and 15 Beaufort Road have relatively broad and shallow plots with a semi-detached form reflective of houses in Lammas Road. The proposal would contrast with the character and context of these houses and with that of the terraced houses in Fanshawe Road.

7. The proposal would be a prominent, incongruous and relatively isolated dwelling that would not relate well to the surrounding pattern of development. It would thereby conflict with Policies LP1 and LP39 of the Richmond Local Plan (2018) (RLP) and the Supplementary Planning Document on Small and Medium Housing Sites (2006) which require development on back gardens to relate well to the site's existing context and to maintain local residential character.

Parking

8. The proposal would result in the loss of 2 parking spaces for the host dwelling, without replacement, and provision of 1 on site space for the new dwelling. There would be a shortfall of 3 off-street spaces according to the Council's standards. A bus route goes along Beaufort Road, but the site nonetheless has a PTAL rating of 1b indicating poor access to public transport.

9. Whilst the site is in a sustainable location close to local amenities, the size of both the proposed and enlarged host dwellings would nonetheless be likely to encourage car ownership. There is a long return frontage along Beaufort Road available for on street parking but all roads close to the site were heavily parked at the time of my site visit, albeit with minor road works present. The appellant's parking survey indicates low overnight parking stress figures for some local roads and capacity to absorb any overspill parking with spaces available to both sides of Fanshawe Road. However, this has a narrow carriageway that was parked only on one side at my visit. Overspill parking to the other side would compromise the carriageway width for passing traffic.

10. From the information available I am not satisfied that the proposal would not unreasonably add to on street parking congestion; this could impact on highway safety. The proposal would thereby be in conflict with Policies LP44 and LP45 of the RLP which seek to ensure sufficient on-site parking provision and to minimise the impacts of development on the local highway network.

Affordable housing

11. Policy LP36 of the RLP requires a contribution towards affordable housing on all housing sites with a financial contribution commensurate with the scale of the development. Whilst the National Planning Policy Framework at Paragraph 63 discourages the seeking of affordable housing contributions on small sites, given the acute need for affordable housing in Richmond, I attach weight to the recently adopted development plan policy that seeks such contributions. The appellant has agreed to the Council's calculated contribution of £19,139 but a legal agreement has not been prepared to secure this. Best practice is that such financial matters should be the subject of an obligation rather than a planning condition. The proposal would thereby be in conflict with Policy LP36 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing.

Planning balance

12. The proposal would result in the benefit of an additional dwelling of appropriate size for this residential area. It would make a small contribution to the need for more homes which would be in accordance with national, London wide and local planning policies on housing supply. However, this modest benefit would be outweighed by the harm arising from the proposal's impact on the character and appearance of the area and in relation to parking and conflict with local planning policies relating to these matters.

Other matters

13. I have noted the representations on the proposal. Some have commented on the dwelling being partially constructed over the rear access road. The applicant has confirmed sole ownership of the land. It is unclear how any rights of way over the land would be affected by bridging over the access, but this would be a civil matter and is not for my consideration.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, would not provide adequate on-site parking in relation to highway safety and would not provide an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Rory MacLeod BA(Hons), MRTPI

INSPECTOR