
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2021

by David Fitzsimon MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3258628
57-59 Coronation Road, Hayes UB3 4JT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Gurpreet Dhaliwal against the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref. 75363/APP/2020/30 is dated 6 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is 'a conversion of two 3 bedroom house dwellings to four 2 bedroom flats'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and the application for planning permission is refused.

Procedural Matter

2. The Application Form states that the site address is 57 Coronation Road but the proposal relates to both 57 and 59 Coronation Road. For completeness, I have updated the site address accordingly.

Main Issues

3. This appeal is against the Council's failure to determine the application within the prescribed period. The Council has indicated that had the application been determined, it would have been refused for several reasons. In light of this explanation, the main issues are as follows:
 - The effect of the proposal on the supply of family dwellings within the Borough;
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwellings and the local area; and
 - Whether the arrangements for the proposed amenity spaces serving the flats are acceptable in terms of size and privacy.

Reasons

Supply of family dwellings

4. The proposal seeks to extend and convert two modest 3 bedroom semi-detached family dwellings to four 2 bedroom flats.
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5. Policy DMH4 of the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Development Management Policies (DMP) directs that residential conversion will only be permitted where, amongst other considerations, the dwelling is on a residential street where the proposal will not result in more than 10% of properties being redeveloped into flats and that the internal floorspace of the original building to be converted is at least 120 square metres. Furthermore, paragraph 4.6 of the DMP, which the Council has explained is based on the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016), states *'the Council's current information on housing need indicates a substantial borough-wide requirement for larger affordable and private market units, particularly three bedroom properties'*.
6. There is no suggestion that the proposal would result in more than 10% of the dwellings within Coronation Road being converted to flats. However, the Appellant does not dispute the Council's assertion that the *original* floorspace of each of the two dwellings is under the 120 square metre threshold.
7. The information available to me indicates there is an identified need to retain family sized three bedroom units within the Borough. The proposal would result in the loss of such units and it is in clear conflict with policy DMH4 of the DMP.

Character and appearance

8. The appeal relates to a pair of semi-detached houses which sit in a road of broadly similar properties. They have single storey additions to the front, side and rear. The proposal seeks to add two storey extensions wrapping around the side and rear of each dwelling, meeting at the common boundary.
9. The extensions would be finished in suitable external materials. At first floor level, their frontages would be recessed from the main body of each dwelling. They would have a lower ridge and the roof angle would follow that of the main roof. However, the ground floor front section of each extension would not be recessed from the main body of the host dwelling. They would tie into each existing porch and would sit in line with the projecting gable feature. In my view, this element would appear disjointed. Such an arrangement would not be directly comparable to that at No. 51 Coronation Road where a single storey section of a side extension projects only as far as the main recessed section of the original dwelling.
10. The two storey additions would project a significant distance from the main rear elevations of each dwelling. The overall width and depth of the extensions necessitates an extensive crown roof, which is a design feature that is alien to the traditional roof form of each house. To my mind, the proposed extensions would overwhelm the host dwellings and their overall scale and form would not be subservient. The visual harm arising from the single storey front section would be visible within the street scene, whilst the overall size of the extensions would not be in keeping with the established pattern of development within this part of Coronation Road.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwellings and it would not be in keeping with the established pattern of development within the immediate locality. In such terms, the proposal conflicts with policy BE1 of the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies and policies DMHD1, DMHB11

and DMHB12 of the DMP, which collectively promote high quality design that harmonises with the local context.

Amenity space arrangements

12. Policy DMHB18 of the DMP explains that all new residential development and conversions will be required to provide good quality and usable private outdoor amenity space. It indicates that a two bedroom flat should have a private amenity space of at least 25 square metres. The proposed site layout shows the amenity space would be communal and according to the Council's figures which have not been disputed, the total area of garden space retained for Nos. 57 and 59 would be some 30 and 40 square metres respectively. Clearly, this would amount to a shortfall for each flat.
13. In addition, future occupiers of the first floor flats would have to walk around to the rear to access this space. Given that the amenity areas would be communal, the occupiers of the first floor flats would be able to look directly into the rear living/dining rooms of the ground floor flats when using this space. To my mind, this would result in an unacceptable invasion of privacy.
14. For the above reasons, I find that the size of the amenity spaces which would serve the proposed flats would be substandard whilst its layout would not safeguard adequate levels of privacy for future occupiers of the ground floor flats. In such terms, the proposal conflicts policy DMHB18 of the DMP.

Other considerations

15. I accept the internal spaces of the proposed flats meet relevant space standards and the development would have no adverse impact on the living conditions of nearby residents. However, these are neutral factors in the overall planning balance. Whilst I also agree that the appeal site enjoys a sustainable location, this does not justify a harmful form of development.
16. In reaching my decision, I have considered the additional concerns raised by a third party. Car parking is provided on the forecourts of the two dwellings and kerbside parking is also available. I agree with the Council that this amounts to suitable provision. Whilst doubts have been raised about the capacity of the public sewer to accommodate any additional load, this is not supported by any technical evidence and I note it is not a concern shared by the Council.

Overall Conclusions

17. I conclude that the proposal would result in the loss of two family houses in an area where there is a demonstrable need for such accommodation. In addition, the overall scale of the development proposed would harm the character and appearance of the host dwellings and would not be in keeping with the pattern of development within the local area. Also, the size of the proposed amenity spaces is substandard and their arrangement would not safeguard adequate levels of privacy for future occupiers of the ground floor flats.
18. The arguments advanced on behalf of the Appellant do not outweigh these failings and the associated policy conflict therefore the appeal does not succeed.

David Fitzsimon INSPECTOR