



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 January 2022

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/21/3283965

Ruislip Nursing Home, 173 West End Road, Ruislip HA4 6LB

- 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 Cader, Ruislip Nursing Home against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 19817/APP/2021/913, dated 9 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is new outbuilding in rear garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have also dealt with an appeal proposing a front porch on the site. That proposal is the subject of a separate decision¹.
3. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. I note that a different description has been entered at Part E of the appeal form which reflects the description stated on the Council's decision notice, but neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, a Locally Listed Building.

Reasons

5. The appeal site includes a detached building identified by the Council as a Locally Listed Building, and which therefore comprises a 'non-designated heritage asset' in accordance with the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
6. The Local List entry dates the building to around 1872 and identifies it as a former farmhouse. The fairly close-knit residential development which surrounds the appeal site means that it no longer sits within a wider agricultural landscape. Even so, it has a much larger plot and more spacious setting in comparison to nearby dwellings, albeit that I note this has been diminished to some extent by extensions to the building and a number of

¹ Appeal reference APP/R5510/W/21/3283960

outbuildings that sit to its side and rear. In my view, the historic interest of the building as an example of a former farmhouse together with its architectural interest add much to its significance as a non-designated heritage asset.

7. The proposed outbuilding would be positioned between an existing outbuilding used as a laundry and the rear of the appeal building, and would in part replace a landscaped bed close to the boundary of the site with 37 Northdown Close. The proposed site plan drawing does not illustrate the existing extensions to the appeal building, but they are shown on the existing site plan and from my observations at my visit it is apparent that the development would be close to the rear of the building. It would also be close to the existing laundry outbuilding, and the resulting impression would be of a near continuous spread of built form extending along the depth of the site from the rear of the building. In my judgement, this would exacerbate the visual impact of the additional coverage of the site by built form, and together with the existing outbuildings would give a cluttered appearance and cause further erosion of the remaining setting to the Locally Listed Building.
8. The flat roof design and limited detailing would additionally result in a bulky and somewhat plain appearance, and I consider that the timber cladding to a structure of this scale would stand out incongruously against the detailing and more traditional materials and appearance of the host building. While I acknowledge that it would be of very similar form and appearance to the laundry outbuilding, its closer proximity means that the visual contrast against the host building would be much more pronounced.
9. The development would not be readily visible from West End Road, but it would be appreciable from surrounding properties as well as within the site. In any event, character and appearance are distinctly different matters and I find for the reasons above that the character of the Locally Listed Building would be harmed by the further development within its setting.
10. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, the Framework advises that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In my assessment, the harm to the significance of the Locally Listed Building through the development in its setting would be modest and I am sympathetic to the appellant's desire to provide staff rest facilities. I also note comments that these are much needed in light of stresses placed on staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is no firm detail before me to demonstrate that the appeal proposal represents the only way such a facility could be provided, and I find taking a balanced judgement that the benefits of the proposal are insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the Locally Listed Building.
11. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building. It would therefore conflict with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies 2012 and policies DMHB 3 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two – Development Management Policies 2020 (DMP). Amongst other things, these policies advise that proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a Locally Listed Building, and require high quality design which enhances local distinctiveness and development that conserves and enhances locally recognised historic features.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when it is read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan should be reached. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Bowyer

INSPECTOR