
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2022

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Decision date: 16 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3286613

148 Spring Grove Road, Hounslow TW3 4BP

- 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 Mrs T Thiagarajan against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01048/148/P2, dated 17 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2021.
 - The development is a proposed vehicular crossover.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon parking spaces in the locality, as well as highway safety.

Reasons

3. I appreciate that the road conditions I experienced on my site visit was only a snapshot of the road at this particular time, however I have also considered the evidence submitted by both main parties, and in light of this, I am satisfied that what I saw represents typical conditions. Spring Grove Road is a single carriageway in each direction and provides a route for vehicles between Hounslow and the junction of the M4 motorway. Whilst carrying more vehicles than the surrounding residential streets and cul-de-sacs, Spring Grove Road is a residential road with a low speed limit of 30 miles per hour. The road is relatively straight at the appeal site with the road containing street lighting, pedestrian footpaths, and vehicular parking on the road.
4. Some dwellings along the road have single vehicular crossovers and accesses, whilst there are also dwellings such as the appeal site where an informal access has been made to the front garden for the parking of vehicles, however this is not formalised via the addition of a dropped kerb. In this particular case, there is a designated public parking bay in front of the appeal site with street sign. According to the Planning Officer's Report the area has a low Public Transport Accessibility Level of 2 which is 'poor' and as such there is a need to ensure adequate provision for vehicular parking. Along Spring Grove Road, road markings have been made to assist in the formalising of the function of the road given the competition for parking spaces within this area. Both sides of the road have designated parking bays for resident's permit parking and yellow lines that restrict parking to enable the smooth flow of traffic through the area.

5. The Hounslow Local Plan (LP) Policies CC1 and CC2 are design orientated policies which seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and responds to the local context, and ensures permeability and for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate and understand places. The Residential Crossovers and Off-Street Parking Policy 2016 (RCOPP) is an additional material consideration that seeks to balance the needs of residents against highway safety and the character and appearance of a locality. In particular, there is an emphasis on achieving good design and layout of parking spaces, and managing crossovers against the demands of on street parking.
6. According to the Council's calculations, the proposed development would result in the loss of approximately 2 on-street car parking spaces. Paragraph 3.43 of the RCOPP states that an application of a crossover that would result in the loss of short term parking bays would be refused unless bays can be re-provided in a suitable alternative location. It is clear that the proposal would result in a net loss of at least two vehicular spaces. The Applicant's Statement of Case (SoC) states that these compensatory spaces could be provided at the 'south side of Spring Grove Road opposite the appeal site.' No further information to this location is provided, however on my site visit I observed that across the road from the appeal site are already spaces designated for on-street parking, so a net loss of vehicular spaces would still be apparent as the proposal by the applicant would not appear to compensate for the loss of spaces.
7. Whilst I acknowledge comments from the Applicant's SoC with regards to LP Policies CC1 and CC2 not specifically referring to 'highway safety;' they do instead refer to the need to ensure the design of new development is appropriate for pedestrians and cyclists as described above. In particular the Council in their Officer Report expresses concern with the design of the crossover and area of parking with regards to the lack of visibility splays where the minimum required splays of 2.4 metres x 2.4 metres have not been shown to be able to be achieved. Additionally, there was no information submitted with regards to the distances between neighbouring crossovers.
8. The applicant's SoC does not contain any discussion or further evidence as to these elements of the Council's concerns. On this basis, the information presented has failed to demonstrate that adequate visibility splays can be achieved as well as sufficient separation distance is appropriate and in line with the Council's Policy. Consequently, based on the information before me, the scheme has not demonstrated that it would avoid adverse highway safety implications.
9. Taking the above into account and in conclusion of this matter, the proposal would result in the loss of parking spaces, where adequate compensatory provision has not been provided, and the design of the development has failed to demonstrate that it would not cause highway safety concerns. As such, the proposal would be contrary to LP Policies CC1 and CC2, and the RCOPP as described previously.

Conclusion

10. Taking the above into account, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR