
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2023

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 27 MARCH 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/22/3308733

151 - 155 North Street, Romford RM1 1ED

- 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 John Gaskin against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0725.22, dated 5 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is a dropped kerb.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the address of the appeal site as it appears on the application forms, although the proposed dropped kerb would serve the area in front of Nos 151/153 North Street.

Main Issue

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effects of the proposal on the safe and efficient functioning of the adjacent highway and the visual effects on the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to this 2 storey building which accommodates a commercial use and appears to also include some residential use. The entire frontage of the property is hard-surfaced and marked out for car parking spaces. There is access to the rear of the building set to one side of it. The property sits adjacent to the junction of North Street with Riverside Close.
5. The Council states that the site lies within the Romford Strategic Development Area boundary and that North Street (A125) forms part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The frontage of the site is marked out with 7 parking spaces, set side-by-side, occupying the whole frontage. An access to the rear and also frontage parking for No 155 sit to the side of this.
6. There is an existing dropped kerb at the left-hand side of the site, close to the junction with Riverside Close. This would appear to be capable of giving convenient access and egress to 2 spaces. A dropped kerb to the right serves the rear access and appears to give convenient access to 1 frontage space.

- The proposal would be to drop the kerb between these 2 existing access points, for an additional width, said to be around 7.5m. Taking account of the existing dropped kerbs, the total length would be over 20m.
7. The proposal would not allow any refuge for pedestrians passing the site on the pavement. The entire width would accommodate cars which could be entered of left directly onto the adjacent road. I consider that this would compromise the safety of pedestrians and leave them with no protected area of pavement when passing the site.
 8. The proposal would result in cars/vehicles entering or leaving the site in a reverse gear; most likely reversing out of the site. The adjacent road carries a significant number of vehicles, and the site sits adjacent to the start of a bus lane. Having considered these factors and the proximity of the junction with Riverside Close, I consider that cars/vehicles reversing out onto the main road would be unsafe due to the nature of traffic on the main road and the prospect of vehicles emerging from Riverside Close, onto North Street. Such manoeuvres would also interrupt the free flow of vehicles on this part of the SRN. The appellant indicates that the proposal would only serve one car parking space. This would not appear to be the case, in my opinion. It would allow for an increased convenience (and therefore increase the prospect of using spaces) to enter and leave some existing spaces as well as allowing access to 2 spaces which cannot be properly accessed from the existing dropped kerbs. My view is that the proposal would allow for access to 4 spaces.
 9. The Council also indicates that the increase in the number of vehicles on the frontage would have an unacceptable visual effect and would constrain pedestrian access. The area is already hard-surfaces and marked out as parking. Therefore, some visual effect has already resulted. However, I agree with the Council that there would be some albeit, minor, detrimental effect from additional car/vehicles being present on the full width of the site. Although this may not have been sufficient to dismiss the appeal by itself, it adds to the overall unacceptable effects of the proposal.
 10. I have taken account of the apparent absence of accidents relating to vehicles entering North Street, as set out by the appellant. I have taken account of all other matters raised in the representation. I conclude that the proposal would give rise to vehicle movements which would have an unacceptable effect on the safe and efficient functioning of the highway, including the pavement. There would also be some minor unacceptable visual effects. As a consequence, the proposal is contrary to Policies T4 and T6 of The London Plan and Policies 23 and 24 of the Havering Local Plan (adopted 2021). I find no matters which are sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR