



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2023

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/22/3306964

572 London Road, Hounslow, Isleworth TW7 4EP

- 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 Parmi Jutlay, Fillink Limited against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00707/572/P6, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Garage Extension - Add a Second Storey.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - i) Whether the principle of the proposal is acceptable with regard to the appeal site's context and the development plan; and,
 - ii) Whether the proposal would safeguard the character and appearance of the area, including the Spring Grove Conservation Area ('CA').

Background

3. The appeal relates to a detached, single storey garage ('outbuilding') on the junction of Thornbury Road and Pembroke Place. This is located to the rear of the main property at the appeal site, which is an end-of-terrace, three-storey building which faces London Road. This building has a commercial use on the ground floor with flats above.

Reasons

Principle of the proposal

4. The Council's assessment supposes that the proposal relates to the creation of a self-contained dwelling. However, the planning application only refers to the addition of a second storey. Furthermore, the 'Fire Statement' submitted with the application says that the garage and the proposed storage space is non-residential and its main purpose is to store printers. The appeal statement confirms this along with advising that the outbuilding would also be used as a workshop for the repair of printers.
5. Given that the outbuilding would be used in association with the ground floor commercial use of the main building at the appeal site, I see no, in principle,

objection to this. Furthermore, I find no conflict with Policies CC1 and CC2 of the Hounslow Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) ('HLP'), which mainly relate to matters of design.

Character and appearance

6. The outbuilding is located at the pavement along Thornbury Road and therefore is prominent in views from along this road and also falls within the Spring Grove CA.
7. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention should be paid to the desirability that the character or appearance of the conservation area should be preserved or enhanced. Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') requires me to assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset).
8. Based on my observations, the significance of the Spring Grove CA is largely derived from its high-quality period buildings, which together form cohesive street scenes that provide a strong visual link to the past. In particular, to the south-east, across Thornbury Road, are 574 London Road (The Milford Arms) and 2 Thornbury Road. Both these buildings are locally listed and their significance lies in their architecture and contribution to the streetscape.
9. Most notably, the majority of nearby buildings incorporate brickwork finishes and detailing complemented by high-quality fenestration, which generally incorporate header and cill details.
10. The outbuilding subject of this appeal has undergone some unsympathetic alterations, including blockwork infilling along its elevation which faces Pembroke Place. Nonetheless, its façade which faces Thornbury Road incorporates brickwork with detailing, which is featured in other buildings in the area. Therefore, the outbuilding is settled within the street scene and complements this and thereby contributes to the significance of the Spring Grove CA.
11. The erection of an additional storey would increase the height of the outbuilding. This, however, would incorporate a shallow pitched roof and therefore would be of a modest scale and proportionate relative to the existing outbuilding. Moreover, in the context of the scale of the main building at the appeal site, the outbuilding as extended would remain subservient.
12. However, the upper half of the outbuilding is to be finished in uncharacteristic timber cladding. This along with the insertion of a window of a basic design along the elevation facing Thornbury Road would undermine the brickwork finish of the outbuilding, which would compromise its appearance and unacceptably detract from the wider streetscene. Such harm would be exacerbated by the prominent position of the outbuilding.
13. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, including the significance of the Spring Grove CA. The harm the proposal would cause to the significance of the Spring Grove CA would be less than substantial. Paragraph 202 of the Framework states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed

against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

14. The proposal would provide additional storage space in support of the appellant's business and thereby reduce reliance on costly off-site storage. Nevertheless, this would largely be a personal benefit for the appellant.
15. Having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Spring Grove CA, despite finding the harm to be less than substantial, I still attach significant weight to this. Such harm can be outweighed by public benefits. However, none have been identified in this case.
16. For the above reasons, the proposal is contrary to policies CC1 and CC2 of the HLP. Together, these policies seek to promote and support high quality urban design and architecture to create attractive, distinctive, and liveable places. Along with requiring development to maintain the character of an area and respond to any local architectural vernacular that contributes to an area's character. Accordingly, I also find conflict with the aims of the Framework for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Other Matters

17. The appellant alleges lack of communication from the Council regarding the planning application. This, however, is a matter for the main parties and does not alter my findings on the main issues.

Conclusion

18. I have found that there is no, in principle, objection to the use associated with the proposal. However, because of its design and appearance, this would harm the character and appearance of the area, and the significance of the Spring Grove CA. For this reason and overall conflict with the development plan, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR