

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 January 2024

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/23/3321672

95 Greenford Road, Greenford UB6 9BB

- 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 Steven Galvin against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 225289FUL, dated 16 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of an additional storey to provide 2 studio flats.
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Application for Costs

1. An application for costs was made by Mr Steven Galvin against the Council of the London Borough of Ealing. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 19 December 2023, during consideration of the appeal. The main parties have been given an opportunity to comment on these changes and have not raised any new issues.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and the local area.

Reasons

5. 95 Greenford Road is a 2 storey block of flats, sitting on a corner plot within a mixed residential and commercial area, next to 2 storey houses of similar design and materials. The proposal is to add an additional storey in order to provide 2 more flats. This follows on from a previous, similar proposal which was dismissed on appeal in 2022¹. The revised proposal is intended to address

¹ APP/A5270/W/21/3288396

the previous Inspector's concerns about the design, including through the use of full hipped roofs instead of half-hipped, raised eaves to enable the use of windows instead of dormer windows, the use of render to match the existing walls rather than tile hanging and a minor change to the window layout.

6. The building proposed here would be the same height as in the earlier proposal. I agree with the previous Inspector that this is not objectionable in itself, bearing in mind the wider context which includes a taller school building and potential 14 storey block (which appeared to be at an early stage in the construction process at the time of my visit). In general terms, corner plots like this can often accommodate taller buildings. In this case the building would become one of the most prominent in the immediate vicinity, so would require a high quality design.
7. Local and national policies emphasise the need for sensitive design. Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan and policies 7B and 7.4 of the Council's Development Management Development Plan Document aim to deliver good design that responds positively to local distinctiveness and complements the local street sequence, building pattern, scale, materials and detailing. Framework paragraph 124 encourages the provision of new homes through upward extensions like this - where they would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and would be well-designed. Paragraph 131 advocates the creation high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings.
8. The changes to the proposal substantially simplify the design of the building this time around, addressing a number of the previous Inspector's concerns. I nevertheless find that in this corner location, set forward of the nearby houses, a building of this increased bulk and height would still require a better, more finely tuned design. The building as now proposed would be somewhat monolithic, with no articulation or design changes to break up the massing or relieve the very regular, block-like form. I fully accept that it would be of similar appearance and materials to nearby houses, but it would be much larger in scale. Such a plain design approach would not create an appropriate building for its size and prominence.
9. Furthermore, concerns raised by the Council about the inaccurate window locations shown on the west elevation have not been addressed and glazing patterns on other windows do not appear to be shown correctly either, so that it is difficult to be clear about the overall appearance. I find myself in agreement with the Council in that the massing, scale and fenestration of the building all need further attention if good quality design is to be achieved.
10. I therefore have to conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the building and the local area, in conflict with the above-mentioned policies. I recognise that this conclusion may seem unhelpful in that it does not clarify the changes needed to achieve an acceptable development, but like the previous Inspector I can only comment on the proposal before me.
11. The proposal would help to boost the supply of homes and make effective use of this sustainably located site, in line with objectives of the Framework and London Plan. The modest benefits of providing 2 additional studio flats do not,

however, outweigh my concerns about the main issue and the identified conflict with the development plan.

12. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR