



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2024

by Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26TH July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/24/3339367
196 Great West Road, Hounslow TW5 9AR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Kiran Johal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is 00505/196/P8.
 - The development proposed is the change of use from a Small House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4) to a Large HMO (Sui Generis incorporating a refuse and cycle storage area).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant submitted a HMO Management Plan with the appeal, which the Council considers addresses reason for refusal 2. I have dealt with the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

3. This is whether the location of the proposal would be suitable, with specific regard to access to services, facilities and good public transport links.

Reasons

4. Located on the north side of the Great West Road, the property is a 2 storey semi-detached house. The proposal is to convert the existing small HMO to a large HMO for up to 8 people.
5. Policy SC10 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (September 2015) (LP) sets out criteria for the assessing HMOs to achieve sustainable mixed communities. This relates to all HMOs which require planning permission. The intent behind the policy seeks to avoid larger HMOs in out of centre locations and the fact that the proposal is already a small HMO, changed under permitted development rights, does not preclude its assessment under this policy. This is because there is an intensification in the use of the site, and this is of a scale that can bring about material change and impacts on the surrounding area.
6. Criterion d) requires that HMOs are located within a convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and has good public transport links. This is because proposals give rise to increased movements from home to shops, services and work by the multiple occupiers, and it is unlikely that each

occupant would have access to a private car. Within the supporting text, the convenient walking distance is 400m. The HMO Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (November 2017) sets out that good accessibility is Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) Level 4 and above.

7. The property is located more than 400m from town centre facilities, being over a mile from Hounslow town centre, within a PTAL Level 3 (medium accessibility). The appellant notes that it would be around 650m from Hounslow West London underground station and there are shops and other facilities along Bath Road. However, this would still considerably exceed the 400m distance and the nearby shops could not be considered as town centre facilities. Whilst the increase in occupants would not be substantial, it would introduce a larger number of occupants into an area that does not have convenient walking access to town centre facilities. Thus, the location of the proposal would fail to comply with the development plan policy in this regard.
8. Furthermore, Policy SC10 also requires that the property should have a minimum 'original' floor area greater than 130 square metres (sqm) to be suitable for conversion. The original floor space was around 110sqm, below the 130sqm policy requirement. Despite the property already being a small HMO, it does not meet the minimum 'original' floor space for a larger HMO, of which this would be. This would fail to comply with Policy SC10.
9. The intent behind this floorspace requirement appears to relate to the protection of smaller family homes, but it also seeks to avoid the impact that a larger HMO can have on the amenity of an area. The Council have accepted the Management Plan and consider there would be no increased disturbance to existing occupiers, but there would still be a failure to comply with the policy.
10. Consequently, the proposal would not be in a suitable location for a large HMO. Future occupants would not have convenient access to services, facilities and good public transport links. This would be contrary to Policy SC10 of the LP and the SPD.

Other Matters

11. Other appeal decisions were presented by the appellant. Appendix A contains a decision for a similar proposal in the area made in 2017. I recognise the previous Inspector did not find conflict with Policy SC10 in relation to the floorspace, however, based on my reading, there is a clear conflict.
12. The other appeal decisions presented by the appellant are in different local authorities, and thus the development plan is different.

Conclusion

13. There are no material circumstances that indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan, and for the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR