



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2024 by R Parker BSc (Hons)

Decision by S Edwards BA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/24/3338628

65 Benets Road, Hornchurch RM11 3PT

- 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 Mr Andrew Lloyd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref is P1530.23.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Detached garage to front of existing dwelling'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. Benets Road is a suburban residential area typified by 2-storey terraced properties of a stylistic consistency with defined front building lines. Houses are set slightly back from the road, behind small front gardens, many of which have been surfaced and are now used for parking. There are few garages within the immediate locality. Those that are present are attached to the side of their host property, incorporating them into the host dwelling, and thus maintaining the existing pattern of development. Render is the dominant material used, with some brick detailing.
5. The appeal property is a detached dwelling with accommodation in the roof – a design which differs from the uniformity of the surrounding area. However, due to its position at the rear of the plot, significantly set back from the road, disruption to its setting is minimised.
6. The appeal proposal is for the erection of a large garage sited in front of the host dwelling. It would be of a scale disproportionate in the context of the surrounding area, the proximity to its neighbouring property, and its position forward of the host property. The proposed garage would be single storey with

- a flat roof, but its bulk would nonetheless be excessive. The proposed timber cladding would contrast with the rendered palette of the area, accentuating the undue prominence of the structure within its locality. These elements combined would serve to significantly detract from the existing pattern of development, causing harm to the character and appearance of the area.
7. The appellant has stated that the construction of the garage would lead to a reduction in the space available for car parking on the site, thus supporting the London Plan's aim to limit the number of parking spaces at residential dwellings. However, I have been presented with no mechanism which would ensure that the appeal scheme would result in a reduction in car ownership by current or future occupiers of the appeal property, and it could also lead to parking being displaced on street.
 8. The appellant has also stated an increased need for cycle and domestic paraphernalia storage within a garage due to their extant permission to construct an additional floor to the dwelling. While I empathise with the desire for increased storage and secure parking, it does not outweigh the harm the proposal would cause. Additionally, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the appeal scheme is the only solution for secure car and cycle parking, and that there are no, less harmful, alternatives.
 9. The appellant suggests that had a garage extension been built adjacent to 63 Benets Road (No 63) its visual effect would be comparable to that of the appeal scheme, creating a relationship in keeping with the character of the area. However, the existing boundary treatments and plot layouts make the segregation between the plots of 63 and 65 Benets Road (No 65) clear, and the proposed garage would appear unequivocally within the curtilage of No 65. Additionally, the few garages in the area are generally attached and subservient to their host dwellings.
 10. I have had regard to the examples of other garages in the area presented by the appellant. I do not have the full details regarding the construction of these examples before me, so cannot be sure of their similarity to the appeal proposal, particularly in relation to development plan policy and guidance. Nonetheless, I did consider each example listed during my site visit. Those described as non-conforming with the SPD have either been converted into habitable space (as detailed by the appellant), are stylistically coherent, and/or maintain the consistent building line of the area. For these reasons, regardless of their degree of compliance with the SPD, they are not considered comparable to the appeal proposal and therefore I have accorded them very limited weight.
 11. As outlined above, the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Therefore, it is contrary to Policy 26 of the Havering Local Plan 2016–2031 (Adopted 2021) (Local Plan) which supports proposals that are of a high architectural quality and design, but also respect the visual integrity and established scale, massing and rhythm of their built environment.
 12. Furthermore, the appeal scheme does not accord with the aims of the SPD, which states that outbuildings such as garages should be subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and to the plot, should not detract from the character of the area and should be unobtrusively located. The appellant has questioned the relevance of the SPD due to its age. However, I note that it was formally

adopted in March 2011 and sets out principles which are broadly consistent with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (updated December 2023). For these reasons, I have ascribed significant weight to the SPD.

13. The Council have found the proposal to have no adverse effects on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, and I agree. Therefore, the scheme does not conflict with Policy 7 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that residential living standards are not adversely affected.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Parker

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR