



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2024

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/24/3337101

1 Barrington Drive, Harefield UB9 6RJ

- 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 Mrs Anumole Sebastian against the decision of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application reference is 62825/APP/2023/2919.
 - The development proposed is described as a 'Erection of a two storey rear extension and single storey side extensions with balcony, following the demolition of the existing rear conservatory.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have taken the description of the development from the Council's Decision Notice as this provides a more detail as to the elements requiring planning approval. I note that the Appellant's Appeal Statement also includes the Council's description.

Main Issue

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development upon the existing building and the character and appearance of the locality; with consideration given to the significance of the Coppermill Lock Conservation Area CA and the Grade II listed Harefield Rubber Factory building, from development within their setting.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The Coppermill Lock CA is a linear conservation area that follows the path of the Grand Union Canal and the River Colne, and incorporates a number of historic buildings found along the waterway that link to its industrial past during the nineteenth century. Areas closer to the canal retain a commercial use with a number of office buildings, as well as later developments of residential dwellings adjacent. Within the area there is a clear emphasis on vegetation and spaces in and around dwellings which assist in emphasising a spacious and semi-rural feeling and a relationship with the surrounding waterways. The topography of the locality is quite varied with dwellings built around the rise and fall of the land with the presence of retaining walls and increased views towards and over properties. as a result of this. These are some of the elements that reinforce the qualities that contribute to local distinctiveness and the character and appearance of the area.
5. The appeal site lies on the corner of Barrington Drive and Park Lane and is part of a later infill development that consists of a small group of detached dwellings. The

group of dwellings maintain a homogenous and relatively small, simple and functional design with the two storey main component with hipped roof fronting the street with small feature hipped protrusion to the front façade. The dwellings are all constructed of the same brown brick, with feature hanging tiles to the first floor level and different coloured brick fenestration surrounds. Like the adjacent CA, there is an emphasis on vegetation with hedges, front gardens, and tops of trees of rear gardens that can be experienced through gaps between dwellings which presents as a spacious and leafy experience. The appeal site itself is relatively prominent in location being located on a corner plot and due to the variance in topography, the appeal site is taller than the road when travelling down Park Lane towards the CA.

6. In undertaking extensions and alterations to existing dwellings, the Hillingdon Local Plan – Strategic Policies (LPSP) Policies BE1 and Hillingdon Local Plan Development Management Policies (LPDM) Policies DMHD1, DMHB11 and DMHB12 are all design led policies which seek that development achieve a number of design principles such as being integrated with the surrounding area, appreciate scale, height, massing, building lines and gaps between structures, amongst others. London Plan Policies D3 and D4 are also design led policies which reinforce the need to take a design led approach which takes into the characteristics of the surrounding area. LPSP Policy HE1 and LPDM Policy DMHB1 are specific to heritage assets and seeks to ensure that development conserves and enhances Hillingdon's wider historic landscape. LPDM Policy DMHB2 is specific to listed buildings and seeks that development is not detrimental to the significance of a listed building from development within its setting. LPDM Policy DMHB4 is specific to conservation areas and seeks that proposals preserve and enhance the character of a CA, particularly within fringe areas.
7. The proposal would demolish an existing conservatory and erect a large two storey extension to the rear which would wrap around to a single storey extension with balcony to the side. Whilst I agree with the Appellant that considerations regarding subservience and design do not rest in simple calculations, given the overall height, depth and massing of the proposed extension in relation to the existing dwelling, it would be a dominant form of development. The extension has an awkward juxtaposition to the existing building in that the extension would elongate and accentuate the massing and visual bulk of the building to the rear, giving an oversized and dominant appearance when considering the smaller and functional form of the existing dwelling and those dwellings adjacent that are experienced together within the Barrington Drive street scene. Whilst the Appellant notes that the ridge of the extension's roof has been dropped below the main ridge to give a subservient appearance, this is unsuccessful and outweighed by the additional bulk and massing which is quite dominant in terms of its depth, width and massing. This massing is also accentuated by its position on a corner plot where the Park Lane slopes down and away from the appeal site which would allow the appeal site to feature much more prominently.
8. The additional single storey side extension with flat roof and balcony and balustrade adds to the excessive form and massing, giving an overcomplicated appearance, with balconies not being a characteristic found within this location. The single storey side extension with balcony appears as an 'add-on' rather than an integrated element of the overall design. The extension would therefore not be subservient to the existing building nor be experienced as an extension, but rather a dominant component. The extension would in turn harm the character and

appearance of the existing building, and the local distinctiveness of the surrounding locality.

9. Taken as a whole, and in conclusion of this matter, in this particular circumstance, the proposed extensions would be incongruous in this location as a result of design, massing and visual bulk, and not reflective of the positive characteristics of local distinctiveness and appearance of the area. The development would cause an incongruous element within the street scene which would cause detriment to the functional architectural authenticity of the existing dwelling and of the street scene. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to the LPSP Policies BE1 and LPDM Policies DMHD1, DMHB11 and DMHB12 as described previously. The development would also be contrary to Policy D3 and D4 of the London Plan.
10. Turning to the significance of the Conservation Area as detailed previously, the Council Officer report contains no details as to how the extension would interfere with the significance of the CA from development within its setting. Having visited the site, the experience of the CA is more related to the waterway, and the historic buildings surrounding. Whilst the development of the appeal site would be noticeable, I do not feel that the proposed development would cause detrimental effects to the significance of the CA from development within its setting. As such the proposal would cause neutral harm to the significance of the CA from development within its setting. As such I do not agree that the proposal would cause conflict with LPSP Policy HE1 and LPDM Policy DMHB1 and Policy DMHB 4 in relation to the CA.
11. Turning to the setting of the listed building adjacent, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCA) prescribes a duty upon a decision maker to give special regard to the desirability of preserving the significance of a listed building or its setting. Whilst the Council have included the adjacent listed building within the reason of refusal, there is no explanation offered in the Council Officer's report as to what elements of significance have been harmed, the level of harm, or the balancing exercise as prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
12. Despite this, the Harefields Rubber Factory Central Building is a Grade II listed building which is a nineteenth century former large house that is setback from Park Lane. The building itself appears to have been used as the central headquarters of the industrial use, with remaining mill, warehouse and workshops evident in the surrounding area around the listed building. The site contributes to an understanding of the former form and function of the industrial uses, the historic village and its layout and how the building is experienced, reinforcing its waterside location, identity and setting. These are some of the important elements that make up the setting of this listed building and this setting is integral to the building's significance.
13. The listed building now is surrounded by infill development on each side where the listed building is experienced further down Park Lane compared to the appeal site which is at a higher ground level. The setting of the Harefields Rubber Factory Central Building has changed over time, however the ability to experience and appreciate the building within the street scene in terms of its design, location and relationship with surrounding industrial buildings has a wide setting which is important to its significance. I agree with the officer's report that the appeal site is within the setting of this listing, however in my opinion the proposal, whilst large

would cause neutral harm to the significance of the special interest of the listed building from development within its setting. As such whilst I have applied the duty under Section 66 of the PLBCA, I do not agree that the proposal would cause conflict with LPSP Policy HE1 and LPDM Policy DMHB1 and DMHB2, in respect of development affecting the significance of a listing from development within its setting.

Other Matters

14. I note correspondence received from an interested party that details that the proposal would result in a loss of view across the Copper Mill CA and incorrect details regarding the location of hedges being incorrectly notated on the plans. The loss of private views is not a planning matter and therefore has not been taken into account in this decision. Given the lack of compliance with design related policies it has not been necessary to look at the impact on trees and hedges. It is also noted that the Council in their Officer Report were satisfied as to the impact towards trees.

Conclusion

15. Whilst I have agreed with the Appellant with regards to their being neutral harm caused to the significance of the CA and the listed building via development within their setting, when considered as a whole against the Development Plan and material considerations, this would not be sufficient to override the harm caused towards character and appearance of the appeal building and the greater locality. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

J Somers
INSPECTOR