
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2024

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/W/24/3345163

231 London Road, Grays, Thurrock RM17 5YS

- 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 D Singh against the decision of Thurrock Council.
 - The application reference is 23/01222/FUL.
 - The development proposed is for a change of use from barbers to takeaway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal decision is the impact of the development on parking provision and highway safety.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a retail outlet currently used as a barber's salon on the south side of London Road, with the rear boundary bordering a railway line. The immediate surrounds are broadly residential in nature.
 4. The vast majority of the properties along London Road, Rosebery Road and Castle Road in the vicinity of the appeal site rely on on-street parking, where no restrictions appear to exist save for limited stretches of yellow lines around the junctions. At the time of my site visit on a Thursday morning most of these spaces were occupied. This situation is likely to worsen in the evenings when residents return home from work. The availability of parking is therefore very limited, and both the Council and local residents refer to significant parking stress in the area.
 5. Other than the appellant's explanation of case, no formal traffic surveys and analysis have been submitted. I have no robust evidence, for example an assessment of the parking bays outside the site and in the surrounding area on both a weekday and weekend, during daytime and evening hours, the noted length of stays and monitored visitors to and from the adjacent supermarket, and information on the traffic generation for the current use of the appeal site, to suggest that a takeaway would create less demand for car parking and would operate over a shorter timescale than the existing use. In the absence of any compelling conclusion that there would be adequate capacity on the road, I am not convinced that the highway network could accommodate any associated overspill and delivery drivers as a result of the appeal proposal. This would be likely to result in inconsiderate parking that would affect the flow of traffic on London Road to the detriment of local highway safety conditions.
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6. I recognise that the site could be used for food retailing, for instance in the form of a convenience store, with unrestricted opening hours, and that it could change to this use at any time. Moreover, that the Council's parking standards for takeaways do not give rise to the need for a higher level of parking provision than for some common Class E uses. However, I am not persuaded that a retail establishment in this location would attract the same amount of parking in the evening as a hot food takeaway. Similarly, whilst the building could be put to a number of other uses without the need for planning permission, these would be unlikely to generate the same demand for parking at this time.
7. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development would fail to provide adequate off-street car parking provision and prejudice highway safety, contrary to Policies PMD2, PMD8 and PMD9 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development Document 2015 and the Council's Parking Standards (2022). The proposal is also inconsistent with the advice in the Framework, which advocates that development should not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

8. In respect of the reasoning above and all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

C Hall

INSPECTOR