



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2025

by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G5750/W/24/3350815

234 Grange Road, Plaistow, Newham, London E13 0HG

- 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 Mohammed Ahmed against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Newham.
 - The application Ref is 24/00866/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension to existing retail unit.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is, having regard to development plan policy, whether or not the proposed development would undermine the vitality and viability of town and local centres.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is part of a short terrace of two-storey properties which comprises five ground floor commercial units. It is within a primarily residential area. The evidence shows that the appeal property is an existing retail unit, although at the time of my site visit, the unit was not in use and required fitting out before it could be brought into use.
4. The proposed development would result in the extension of a main town centre use that is not within a defined town or local centre.
5. Policies S1, SP6, SP7 and INF5 of the London Borough of Newham Local Plan (2018) seek, amongst other things, to focus main town centre uses to be located in town and local centres in order to, amongst other things, focus investment, economic growth and regeneration in such areas.
6. Policies SD6, SD7 and SD8 of the London Plan (2021) outline that the vitality and viability of London's varied town centres should be promoted and enhanced by, amongst other things, ensuring town centres are the primary locations for commercial activity. These policies outline that when considering development proposals, boroughs should take a town centres first approach, discouraging out-of-centre development of town centre uses. It is also outlined that boroughs should require an impact assessment on proposals for extensions to existing out-of-centre development for retail uses that are not in accordance with the Development Plan.

7. I have not been provided with an impact assessment or any other substantive evidence to suggest the scheme would not harm the vitality and viability of nearby town and local centres. It may be argued that the impact of the proposal on the vitality and viability of nearby town and local centres would be very low, however the cumulative impact of such incremental changes would have significant effects and would undermine the Council's development plan policies in terms of ensuring such developments are contained within town and local centres.
8. The appellant has referred to the benefits for the retail unit in providing additional storage space. Given that it was not in use at the time of my visit, or capable of imminent use, this somewhat weakens the argument that it is necessary for an existing business. Also, there is no evidence to suggest that the use, or any future use, of the existing premises is not viable or that it is dependant on the proposed development going ahead. I therefore give this limited weight in the appeal.
9. Therefore, having regard to development plan policy the proposal would undermine the vitality and viability of town and local centres, contrary to the aims and requirements of policies S1, SP6, SP7 and INF5 of the Local Plan, Policies SD6, SD7 and SD8 of the London Plan.

Conclusion

10. The proposed development would therefore conflict with the development plan and there are no other considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, that outweigh this conflict.
11. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR