



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2024

by H Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/24/3346509

491 London Road, Isleworth, Hounslow TW7 4DA

- 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 A Chaudhry (Hemick Ltd) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2023/3909.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing 3rd floor and construct ground and 1st floor extensions, new 3rd - 5th floors for Class C3 use with 2 existing flats extended and 8 flats (6 New Flats), landscaping and incidental works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Prior to the determination of this appeal, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been published. The substantive matters of the case before me are not however affected thereby. I do not therefore feel any of the main parties' cases would be prejudiced by me proceeding without further consultation thereon.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings; and whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of the proposed flats with regard to communal amenity space.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site is a prominent location at the corner of London Road and St Johns Road, an important focal point in the street scene, within a mixed commercial and residential area. The existing building within the site is three storeys tall and is set back from the junction of the two roads. The buildings are a mix of heights and designs although the consistent height of the properties on London Road give a regular rhythm to the area.
5. Even though there are taller buildings on the opposite side of St Johns Road fronting London Road, the proposal would be substantially higher than the two-storey semi-detached buildings on St Johns Road and the taller mixed use buildings adjacent on London Road. Although the newer buildings on St Johns Road are taller than the proposal, the appeal site is more prominent in views

from London Road where the nearby properties are lower. The increase in height of the building would therefore be an incongruous feature in the street scene.

6. The proposed front extension would also increase the prominence of the building and bring it closer to the back edge of the footpath. Whilst the proposed fifth storey would be set back, going some way to assist in minimising the impact of the proposal, it would be constructed in a different material to the rest of the building. Hence it would still be a prominent and intrusive element in the street scene. Notwithstanding the proposed additional tree planting and landscaping the extension of both the height and depth of the building would be prominent in the street scene and an incongruous addition to the building.
7. The proposal would therefore result in substantial harm to the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings. It would conflict with Policies D3, D4 and D8 of the London Plan 2021 (LP) and Policies CC1, CC2, and SC4 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (HLP) which together and amongst other matters seek to ensure high quality design that responds to its context and character of the area, including improving the public realm and ensuring it is well-designed.

Living Conditions

8. The appellant contends that HLP Policy SC5 does not apply to extensions. However, new housing would be provided and therefore I consider that the Policy is relevant to the proposed development. It states that flats should provide a combination of private outdoor space for every flat and communal open space
9. The additional proposed flats would be of sufficient size to meet the required standard and would have a balcony for private amenity space. Two of the existing flats would also be provided with a balcony, however the two other flats on the first floor would remain unaltered.
10. Policy SC5 states that communal external space should be provided at 25sqm, 30sqm and 40sqm for each flat of up to 3 habitable rooms, 4 habitable rooms and 5 habitable rooms, respectively, less the area of private space provided. This level of communal external space would not be provided by the proposal.
11. While the level of internal floor space and private external space at the flats meets, and in some cases, exceeds, the policy requirements it remains that sufficient communal space should also be provided in line with Policy SC5. Whilst there are areas of green space and parks within walking distance of the appeal site, these would not provide the same benefits to occupiers of the flats that would be associated with communal open space close to their flat, including for drying washing and sitting outside. This lack of communal amenity space would therefore be harmful to the living conditions of occupiers of the proposed flats.
12. The appellant has suggested that additional communal space could be provided on the roof. This would however be accessed through a stairwell hatch and not have level access. There are no details of this before me and I therefore cannot be certain that it would be safe, convenient and usable. The addition of communal space on the roof would fundamentally alter the scheme and for this

reason, I do not consider that this matter could be dealt though the use of condition.

13. The proposal would fail to provide acceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of the proposed flats with regard to communal amenity space. It would conflict with Policies D3 and D6 of the LP and Policy SC5 of the HLP which together and amongst other matters seek to ensure development meet the needs of occupiers, does not compromise amenity and ensures suitable external space.

Other Matters

14. The appeal documents include a signed Unilateral Undertaking (UU) regarding a carbon offsetting contribution which was amended to take into account the Council's comments. However, as I am dismissing for other reasons, I do not consider it necessary to consider this in any further detail.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

15. The appeal scheme would not accord with the development plan in regard to the main issues. I would ascribe these matters substantial weight given their nature and scope. It would however provide new self-contained residential accommodation, in a sustainable location and would contribute to the mix and supply of homes in the area. It would also improve the living conditions in two of the existing flats. The proposal would also reduce the amount of car parking on the site, leading to a reduction in vehicular trip generation and supporting public transport and active travel. The proposed flats would achieve a greater reduction in carbon emissions and energy use than required by the LP, sourcing the energy from renewable sources, including a ground source heat pump. However, due to the scale of the proposals, I would afford these matters moderate weight.
16. The Framework says that decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land. Given my findings in respect of the main issues, in the context of this appeal, the proposal would not amount to efficient use of land, particularly as it would not maintain the area's character or secure healthy places. It would not therefore benefit from the aforementioned support afforded by the Framework.
17. With this and the above in mind, it is clear that there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

H Senior

INSPECTOR