



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2024

by Rebecca McAndrew, BA Hons, MSc, PG Dip Urban Design, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/24/3343499

725 Bath Road, Cranford, Hounslow, Greater London TW5 9SZ

- 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 Ms Sophia Mirza against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is 00083/725/P13.
 - The development is the change of use from an outbuilding to a residential property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. On my site visit I was unable to gain access to the inside of the appeal building. However, I observed all external elevations of the structure and have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.
3. The appellant's statement advises that the property is a 2-bedroom, 2-person unit. Nonetheless, the submitted plans show a 3-bedroom property. I have considered the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans.
4. A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in December 2024. The Council and the appellant have been offered the opportunity to submit further representations in this respect. No comments have been received from either party.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are;
 - i. Whether the dwelling would provide an adequate standard of living conditions for future occupiers;
 - ii. The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers;
 - iii. Whether the scheme is acceptable in highways terms; and
 - iv. The effect on the character and appearance of the area, including the Cranford Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

Living Conditions of Future Residents

6. Policy SC1 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (2015) (LP) opposes the development of self-contained homes within the curtilage of an existing dwelling where there is conflict with other LP Policies.
7. LP Policy CC2 requires development to provide an adequate level of living conditions for future occupiers, including a satisfactory outlook and sufficient daylight. LP Policy SC4 requires high quality development which does not compromise the amenity of future residents. LP Policy SC5 requires high quality internal space and advises that new dwellings must provide accommodation which meets the National Described Space Standard.
8. The proposed dwelling includes a bedroom with one window, which directly faces a rear boundary wall with fence atop. Given the height and proximity of this rear wall/fence to the window, it would unduly restrict the level of daylight to the bedroom. Also, the views from the bedroom would be dominated by this structure, which would be an unacceptably poor outlook. On this basis, the proposed dwelling would not secure a satisfactory level of living conditions for future occupiers in this respect.
9. The proposed dwelling would be accessed off Bath Road, through the curtilage of No 125 Bath Road. Future occupiers would pass through the front garden of No 125 and access a pathway, via a side gate, which leads to the proposed dwelling. The pathway runs between the side elevations of Nos 123 and 125 and through the rear garden of No 125. Given the significant length of this access route, as well as the convoluted nature of this arrangement, it would not be conducive to everyday household comings and goings. This awkward arrangement would render activities, such as carrying shopping to the house, the postal service and other deliveries, more difficult than would be normally expected for a single dwelling. Taking all of this into account, the scheme would not provide an acceptable pedestrian access for residents of the proposed dwelling. Consequently, the proposals would not secure a satisfactory level of living conditions for future occupiers in this respect.
10. One of the Council's reasons for refusal states that the dwelling is of an '*insufficient size ... for the number of occupiers proposed*'. However, given that the Officer Report confirms the dwelling would meet the National Described Space Standards for a property with 2 x double and 1 x single bedrooms, I am satisfied that the dwelling would provide a satisfactory level of space for future occupiers.
11. In conclusion, I have found that the dwelling would secure satisfactory living standards for future residents in terms of the size of proposed rooms and would therefore meet the requirements of LP Policy SC5. Nevertheless, this would not outweigh the unacceptable standard of living conditions which would be experienced by future occupiers, due to the inadequate level of daylight and the poor outlook in one bedroom, as well as the unacceptable pedestrian access arrangement. On this basis, overall, the scheme would fail to secure adequate living conditions for future residents and consequently would conflict with LP Policies SC1, SC4 and CC2 and the provisions of the London Plan.

Living Conditions of Neighbouring Occupiers

12. As described above, the proposed dwelling is located in the rear garden of the appeal property, with the only access being through the curtilage of No 125. Residents of the proposed dwelling would pass a number of ground floor windows

in the side elevations of Nos 123 and 125 to get to their home. These largely appear to be secondary windows which are obscurely glazed. However, a larger window in the side elevation of No 123 does not include obscure glazing and future occupants would therefore have clear views into this property when passing along this route. Future occupiers would also pass through the rear garden of No 125 to reach their home, affording clear views of any occupants enjoying this private amenity space.

13. Given the level of activity that would be generated by a 3-bedroom dwelling, the proposed access arrangements, as I have described, would cause an unacceptable level of disturbance and loss of privacy to the occupants of Nos 123 and 125. The proposal would therefore unduly harm the living conditions of the residents of both of these neighbouring properties.
14. In view of the above, the appeal proposal would conflict with LP Policies SC1, SC4 and CC2, as well as the provisions of the London Plan. Taken together, these seek to secure high quality development which protects the living conditions of existing residents.

Highways

15. The appellant's Statement confirms that off-street parking for the proposed dwelling would be provided within the front garden of No 125 Bath Road. On my site visit I observed that this is a large hard surfaced front garden. However, there is no information before me which demonstrates that there would be sufficient space to accommodate the number of spaces required for both existing and proposed properties, as well as adequate manoeuvring space, within this garden. Therefore, in the absence of evidence to confirm otherwise, I must assume that the proposed dwelling would not benefit from dedicated off-street parking.
16. Whilst LP Policy EC2 allows for car free development, development proposals must demonstrate that this would not be to the detriment of the surrounding highway network. On my site visit I observed that there was on-street parking available in the vicinity during the daytime. However, this could be busier and significantly reduced at other times of the day, including evenings. In the absence of any evidence to demonstrate otherwise, I must assume that the parking needs of the future occupiers could not be accommodated in the surrounding streets, without prejudicing the parking needs of existing residents in the area.
17. As I have described elsewhere in this decision, the access arrangements for the proposed dwelling, which would serve pedestrians and cyclists, would be an unacceptably long and convoluted route. Therefore, this arrangement would not positively contribute to a sustainable local travel network.
18. Taking all the above into account, the proposed development would be contrary to LP Policies EC2 and SC1. Taken together, these seek to secure a sustainable local travel network, including satisfactory parking provision for future occupiers, as well as acceptable means of access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Character and appearance

19. The appeal site is located within the CVCA. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 72(1) of

the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Council's Officer Report confirms that the proposed subdivision would not harm the CVCA. From the information before me and observations on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree.

20. Nonetheless, one of the Council's reasons for refusal states that the division of the rear garden of No 124 harms the general character of the area. The dividing fence is already in situ. It is not visible within the wider area and a good level of garden area is secured for both No 124 and the proposed dwelling. Also, given that there is a variety of plot shapes and sizes in the area, the proposal would not undermine an existing development pattern. Taking all of this into account, the subdivision does not unduly harm the character and appearance of the site or area.
21. In view of the above, there is no conflict with LP Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC4 in this respect. Taken together, they seek to protect the character and appearance of the area, including the CVCA.

Conclusion

22. Whilst I have found the development to be acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the area, this does not outweigh the identified harm to the living conditions of future residents and neighbouring occupants, as well as highways infrastructure.
23. For the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR