



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2025

by **M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/24/3353813

654 Bath Road, Hounslow TW5 9TN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Heathrow Muslim Community Centre against the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2023/0655.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing extensions and erection of a replacement single storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of the existing extensions and erection of a replacement single storey side and rear extension at 654 Bath Road, Hounslow TW5 9TN, in accordance with application Ref P/2023/0655 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) Unless otherwise required by any other condition attached to this permission, the development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with the following approved drawings and document: Site Location Plan (1:1250); Proposed Drawings: AR-111, AR-112, AR-113 and Fire Safety Strategy.
 - 3) Prior to any above ground works taking place (excluding demolition) the details of all external materials including the specifications for the proposed green roof and solar panels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be undertaken and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) Prior to any above ground works taking place (excluding demolition) a scheme for on-site cycle storage (including a timetable for implementation) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the cycle storage shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and timetable and retained for the life of the development.

Preliminary Matters

2. Because 'ad-hoc' is not an act of development, I have removed this term from the description for the purposes of my Decision.

3. In reaching my Decision, I have considered the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework that was published in December 2024 (as amended) ('the Framework') but this does not alter my findings on the main issues.

Main Issues

The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:

- i) The living conditions of neighbours; and
- ii) Highway safety.

Reasons

Living conditions of neighbours

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey semi-detached property on the southwest corner of Bath Road and Burnham Gardens. The property operates as a Muslim community centre and place of worship ('Community Centre').
5. The area to the side and rear of the two-storey property incorporates a number of single storey extensions, some of which are of sub-standard materials and construction and also have limited design co-ordination. Therefore, I concur with the Council that these do not positively contribute to the appearance of the area. Whilst third parties have expressed concerns that the existing extensions do not benefit from planning permission, there is nothing to suggest that the Council can pursue enforcement action in respect of these.
6. It is common ground between the main parties that the proposed single storey extension, which is to replace the extant extensions, will not result in any marked increase in the footprint or internal space which exists at the Community Centre.
7. On the information before me, the Community Centre is already operating at its maximum visitor capacity and sometimes exceeds this. Therefore, and whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would be of a more robust construction than the existing extensions, I am unpersuaded that this in itself would result in any increase in membership or visitors to the Community Centre and any associated noise and disturbance.
8. In addition to providing a more cohesive design, the proposed extension, which would need to comply with building regulations is likely to incorporate better insulation relative to the extant extensions. Thereby limiting any noise and disturbance associated with the internal use of the Community Centre.
9. Accordingly, the proposal is unlikely to cause any harm to the living conditions of neighbours, over and above the extant use of the Community Centre. Therefore, I find no conflict with policies CC1 and CC2 of the Hounslow Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) ('HLP'). Together, these policies seek to promote and support high quality urban design and architecture to create attractive, distinctive, and liveable places.

Highway safety

10. I have found that the proposal would not result in an increase in the membership or numbers of visitors to the Community Centre. Also, and although my visit only represents a snapshot in time, most of the visitors to the appeal property were

walking to the Community Centre for midday prayers. This is also supported by the evidence set out in the submitted Transport Statement.

11. Nevertheless, on the information before me and my observations, I do not dispute that on occasions visitors to the Community Centre are responsible for inconsiderate parking, which has led to increased parking stress within the local area to the detriment of the efficiency of the local transport network. Even so, this is an existing situation and possibly requires better highway enforcement. Moreover, there is no substantive evidence that the existing parking issues in the area would be worsened by the proposal. In addition, the provision of cycle storage facilities would provide an alternative to car travel to and from the Community Centre, which may help to ease parking related issues in the area.
12. As such, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable harm to highway safety. Therefore, I find no conflict with HLP Policy EC2, which seeks to develop a sustainable local transport network.

Other Matters

13. The proposed extension would extend the full depth of the site and would be built next to the shared boundary with 656 Bath Road. However, the eaves height at the boundary would reduce to about 2.7m in height, which is only slightly higher than the existing extensions. As such, the proposal would not result in a significant loss of outlook for the occupiers of 656 Bath Road, over and above the existing situation.
14. Drainage for the proposed extension would be via the main sewer. Matters relating to works being undertaken near or on shared boundaries are for the relevant parties and would be dealt with through other legislation.

Conditions

15. In imposing conditions, I have had regard to the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance and the Framework. In addition to the standard timescale condition for the implementation of the planning permission, I have imposed a condition specifying the approved drawings and document in the interests of certainty.
16. Whilst the submissions include some information in respect of external materials, to ensure that the development positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area, sustainability and biodiversity, I have specified a condition requiring details of all external materials and finishes, including the proposed green roof and solar panels. Although some cycle parking is indicated on the submitted drawings, to ensure that the cycle storage meets the Council's requirements and in the interests of promoting sustainable modes of travel, it is necessary to impose a condition requiring the details and provision of this.
17. I have not been made aware of any hours of use for the Community Centre. Moreover, for the reasons already provided, the proposal is unlikely to increase noise and disturbance. As such, the Council's request for conditions specifying hours of use and requiring a noise assessment and mitigation are not reasonable or necessary.
18. As already stated, because the new extension would be better insulated and incorporates solar panels and a green roof, this would be of sustainable

construction and is likely to improve biodiversity given that most of the appeal site is occupied by built forms. Therefore, and in taking a proportionate approach, it is not necessary or reasonable to require the submission of energy and biodiversity statements, as suggested by the Council.

Conclusion

19. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission be granted.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR