



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 March 2025

by R Lawrence BSc (Hons), PGDip (TP), MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/24/3350787

307-309 Hatton Road, Feltham, Hounslow TW14 9QS

- 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 Mr H Daruka of Sine Homes UK Ltd against the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2024/0906.
 - The development proposed is extensions to and conversion of existing dwelling and flats to provide 5no additional 1-bed units.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issues

2. The description of development refers to the provision of an additional 5 x 1-bedroom units. It is clear from the plans before me, that the proposal would also retain, or replace, 6 existing units. Consequently, the scheme would provide a gross total of 11 residential units. I have considered the appeal on this basis and note the Council have done the same.
3. On the 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published. The main parties have had the opportunity to comment on the relevant of the revised Framework in respect of the appeal. Whilst no comments were forthcoming, I have made my decision with regard to the revised Framework.
4. The appeal has been made against the failure of the Council to give notice of its decision within the prescribed time period. However, as part of the Council's initial documents, I have received an officer report which sets out that, had the Council been in a position to determine the application, it would have refused planning permission for 11 reasons. Accordingly, I have framed the main issues around these reasons, although where appropriate, I have considered multiple reasons within a single main issue.
5. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt,
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area,

- the effect of the development on the mix of housing in the Borough, including whether the property would be suitable for conversion,
- whether the proposal would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers,
- whether the proposal promotes sustainable modes of travel,
- whether the proposal would provide acceptable waste storage,
- the effect of the proposal on biodiversity and whether it would achieve a biodiversity net gain,
- whether the proposal would meet carbon reduction standards, and
- the effect of the development on surface water run-off.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

6. Development within the Green Belt is inappropriate with the exception of the types of development listed in paragraphs 154 and 155 of the Framework. The appellant contends that the proposal would meet criteria g) of paragraph 154 which refers to limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
7. The appeal scheme involves the redevelopment of the site, through the extension and conversion of the existing building to increase the number of dwellings. The redevelopment would affect the existing dwellings and its associated garden land. As the site falls outside of a defined built-up area boundary, the development of garden land in this case would meet the definition of previously developed land. Accordingly, the proposal would amount to the redevelopment of previously developed land.
8. In respect of the effect on openness, I am mindful that openness has a visual and a spatial dimension. There is a limited amount of built form around the site, with open land to the side and rear, and a church building with a low profile to the other side. Due to the absence of built form, the open space within the rear gardens contributes to the spacious and open character. The open space around the building also results in the existing building appearing highly visible within the street scene.
9. The height of the building would be set down from the existing ridge line, and the width of the building would be much smaller than that of the host building. As such, the extension would appear subordinate in terms of their height and bulk. The building would also be seen in the context of existing two storey residential buildings beyond the church.
10. Due to the open aspect around the site, although the extension would be contained to the rear, they would be visible in localised views from the street scene and adjacent public space. Consequently, whilst some loss of openness, both in spatial

and visual terms would occur, the effects would be relatively limited and localised. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the proposal would not lead to a substantial loss of openness.

11. In light of the above, the proposal would comply with exception g) as set out in paragraph 154 of the Framework and would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, no conflict would arise with Policy G2 of the London Plan 2021 (LP) and Policy GB1 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015 (HLP), which, when read together, require that the Green Belt is protected from inappropriate development.

Character and appearance

12. As well as the adjacent area of housing, the appeal site is bordered by land including open landscaped areas, parks and playing fields, thereby contributing to open and spacious characteristics. Many of the frontages along Hatton Road are entirely paved over for car parking, and there is some limited separation between residential buildings. Except for the neighbouring church which has a low profile, there is general uniformity in the set-back of dwellings from the road, the depth of buildings and their height, with most being two-storeys. This creates a strong consistency in the pattern of development and overall, the area has an attractive, suburban character.
13. The length of the proposed extension would be significant, considerably increasing the depth of the building and would erode its existing simple proportions. This increase would be visible from parts of the street scene and the adjacent public open space. the established pattern of development around, and in particular the consistency in respect of the depth of properties at first floor level, the proposed extension would appear as a bulky, discordant feature, unduly out of character with its surroundings.
14. There is an absence of any worthwhile architectural detail, or visual interest, so as to break up the appearance of the lengthy side elevations. The effect of this is a bland elevation which detracts from the bay windows on the principal elevation, which add visual interest to the property. Consequently, the eye would be drawn to the considerable depth and scale of the extension, as well as their bland appearance.
15. The proposed under-croft passageway is a feature which is not seen elsewhere in the street scene. This would interrupt the symmetry of the front elevation and appear as an urbanising feature indicative of a higher density of development. This would open up some angled views towards the extension to the rear, as well as the extensive area of hardstanding proposed. Overall, I find this feature would have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the building and would appear out of place, within the street scene.
16. I accept that the proposed development would retain many key features. Furthermore, there would be minimal change to the existing roof form, the existing height would be maintained, as would the set back from the road and the bay windows. The materials in the extension would match those in the existing building, and the roof form would reflect that existing. However, the retention of these aspects, would not avoid or overcome the harm caused by the considerable increase in the depth of the building.

17. Drawing together the above, the proposal would result in a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies CC1 and CC2 of the HLP. These policies, taken together, require amongst other things, that development responds to the context and character of the area, and provides a high-quality design.

Mix of housing

18. The existing building comprises of a 3-bedroom family unit spread over two floors at No 307, with the remainder of the building providing flats. The proposal, would provide an additional 5 flats, resulting in a total of 10 x 1-bedroom flats and a studio flat.
19. Policy SC6 of the HLP requires, amongst other things, that development proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing houses have a minimum 130sqm net original floor area and the provision of at least one family sized unit at ground floor. Policy SC3 sets out that the Council will seek to meet local housing need by securing a mix of new housing type, size and tenure.
20. No 307 forms part of the existing appeal building and in isolation, its existing floor area falls considerably short of the minimum size criteria of 130sqm. However, whilst 307 currently operates as a standalone dwelling, it is part of a larger building to be developed. As such, I consider it more relevant to consider the floor area of the existing building as a whole, which considerably exceeds the minimum size requirement.
21. Notwithstanding this, all the proposed flats would provide a single bedroom, and in this regard the proposal would fail to provide a mix of housing. Furthermore, through the loss of the existing family dwelling, there would be a detrimental effect on the supply of family housing within the borough. There is no substantive evidence before me as to why a family unit could not be provided on site, particularly given the existing presence of one.
22. Consequently, although the existing building may be suitable for conversion, I conclude that the proposal would result in the unacceptable loss of a family sized dwelling and would fail to provide an acceptable mix of units. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies SC3 and SC6 of the HLP and thereby, would undermine the Council's objectives to achieve an appropriate mix of housing and to maintain a supply of family sized dwellings.

Living conditions for future occupiers

23. Policy SC5 of the HLP requires developments to be of the highest quality internally and externally. One means of achieving this, is through the application of the Nationally Described Space Standard. There are slight differences between the floor areas provided by the Council and the appellant. However, according to both sets of figures, 10 of the 11 flats proposed would fail to meet the internal space standard, and for the majority of those flats, the shortfall from the minimum space standard would be considerable. There is no adequate justification for this shortfall before me.
24. In respect of the internal accommodation, there are further shortcomings. Most of the ground floor flats would have an outlook over the parking area, with no defensible space between. The likely effects of this include a poor-quality outlook,

and a lack of privacy, with a likelihood of regular comings and goings passing by the habitable room windows. Additionally, in the case of flat 1, the sole outlook for the kitchen/living room, a primary habitable room, would be into the under-croft parking area. The covered nature of this area is such that light into the room would be heavily restricted, and the quality of outlook would be particularly poor. Although many of the upper floor flats also have an outlook over the parking area, due to their elevated position, the windows would offer an outlook beyond the site boundaries and would not have the same privacy issues as the ground floor windows. Overall, the quality of the internal accommodation of the ground floor flats would be poor, contrary to the requirements of Policy SC5.

25. Furthermore, the communal garden would be directly overlooked by habitable rooms, with no defensible space provided in between. With the only access being across a car park, there would no safe and convenient pedestrian access from every dwelling. The size falls short of the 25sqm per flat requirement¹ and there is limited landscaping. These factors considerably limit the quality of the external amenity space.
26. I accept that there is good access to public open space and recreation areas, with a playground and sports facilities opposite the site, and an area for walking next door to the site. However, even if I were satisfied that this provided an alternative to on-site communal amenity space, access to public open space would not compensate for the absence of any private amenity space, which the supporting text to Policy SC5 advises should be appropriate for relaxation as well as essential activities such as drying space and storage. The proposal therefore would fail to provide adequate amenity space for future occupiers, in conflict with Policy SC5.
27. For the reasons set out, I conclude that the proposal would fail to provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers due to the absence of appropriate amenity space, insufficient internal space, and restricted outlook, privacy and light. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy SC5 of the HLP.

Sustainable travel

28. Policy EC2 of the HLP seeks to secure a sustainable local travel network that maximises opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport. Means to achieve this include applying the maximum car parking standards and the levels of cycle parking set out in the LP.
29. Policy T6 of the LP sets out maximum car parking standards according to a sites public transport accessibility levels (PTAL), in order to encourage greater use of non-car modes of transport in areas with higher PTAL.
30. The appeal site has a PTAL rating of 2 and is not within a controlled parking zone. In light of this, Policy T6 of the LP sets out a maximum parking requirement of 8.25 spaces for the site as a whole. The proposal would provide 10 off-street parking spaces, thereby exceeding the maximum number of spaces. The sites access to public transport has already been accounted for within the Policy requirement, and there is no substantive evidence such to justify an over provision of car parking spaces in this case.

¹ Policy SC5, Figure SC 5.2: Benchmark external space standards

31. In respect of cycle provision, a 9 space 'broxap neath' bike rack is proposed with timber decking and a store covering. The space between each rack falls short of the suggested 1m gap² and the cycle rack does not comprise either a Sheffield or two-tier stand recommended. Although the standards do not necessarily preclude other products, I have no clear and convincing evidence to suggest that the cycle rack would be fit for purpose in the circumstances of this site, or that a reduced separation would be appropriate.
32. There is no clear and documented evidence to indicate that the cycle store would secure, enclosed and lockable. The security of the store is of particular importance given the siting of the store, to the front of the building and in close proximity to the public highway. These factors are likely to deter use of the cycle store, which would conflict with the aims of Policy EC2 to promote sustainable travel.
33. Additionally, the proposal does not incorporate a dedicated pedestrian path, within the site frontage. Instead, the forecourt would be shared with cars and cycles. Although an existing position, the increased number of dwellings and occupiers would increase the potential for conflict. In this respect, the scheme does not maximise the opportunities for walking and could discourage use of sustainable modes of travel.
34. Overall, I conclude that the scheme would fail to promote sustainable modes of travel, contrary to Policy EC2 of the HLP and T6 of the LP. Policy T4 of the LP is also included within the Council's reasons for refusal, however no specific conflict has been drawn to my attention.

Waste storage

35. Policy EQ7 requires developments to incorporate suitable arrangements of waste management, including the location, size and design of waste and recycling facilities.
36. The proposal would provide a communal bin store area within the under-croft passageway, towards the front of the site. However, there is no information as to the number of bins that could be accommodated in this area, or their capacity to meet the needs of this development with its level of units and related occupation. Consequently, I cannot be satisfied that the proposal would provide acceptable waste storage, contrary to HLP Policy EQ7 and LP D6.

Biodiversity net gain

37. Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met. The condition is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England, unless exemptions or transitional provisions apply.
38. One of the exemptions refers to self-build and custom build development comprising of no more than nine dwellings. Whilst this scheme is detailed as a self-build or custom build on the submitted planning application form, a self-build exemption claim form has not been submitted, it has not been demonstrated that the appellant is on the self-build register and there is no mechanism to ensure that the proposal would be constructed or used in this manner. Furthermore, the

² West London Cycle Parking Guidance 2017 and London Cycling Design Standards, Transport for London, 2014

proposal would create a total of 11 dwellings on site, as such, it would exceed the maximum of 9 dwellings which apply to that exemption.

39. In light of the above, these important biodiversity requirements have not been met including because the application has not been accompanied by the minimum information set out in Article 7(1A) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order, and it has not been demonstrated that the proposal is a self-build or custom-build property, nor that the proposed development would result in the required Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). It would in all likelihood not meet with the requirements for biodiversity and therefore would be contrary to Policy GB7 of the HLP and G6 of the LP, insofar as they require proposals to avoid a significant adverse impact on biodiversity and aim to secure biodiversity net gain. Although Policy G7 of the LP is also included within the reason for refusal, no specific conflict has been identified.

Carbon dioxide emissions

40. Policy EQ1 requires all developments to meet the carbon reduction requirements set out in the London Plan.
41. The Council is satisfied that the minimum on-site carbon reduction target would be met, however, consider that energy savings have not been maximised. Furthermore, whilst there is reference to the provision of solar panels, these are not shown on the submitted plans and there is no energy statement before me. In these circumstances, there is uncertainty as to whether the scheme would be able to meet with the requirements of the development plan in this respect. Consequently, in the absence of detailed information to demonstrate compliance with the policy requirements, I cannot be satisfied that the development would meet with the carbon reduction standards set out in Policy EQ1 of the HLP and SI 2 of the LP.

Surface water

42. The appeal site would be dominated by hardstanding, the extent of which would be significantly increased in comparison with the existing situation. Furthermore, there is no detailed information set out which shows the methods to achieve greenfield run-off rates and acceptably manage surface water run-off, which is a requirement of Policy SI 13 of the LP and Policy EQ3 of the HLP.
43. The proposal would fail to incorporate methods to achieve greenfield run-off rates and acceptably manage surface water run-off contrary to the above policies.

Planning balance and conclusion

44. The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area would undermine the Council's objectives to achieve an appropriate mix of housing and to maintain a supply of family sized dwellings, and it would fail to provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers. It would also fail to comply with development plan policies in relation to sustainable travel, surface water, carbon dioxide emissions, biodiversity net gain and waste and refuse. Collectively, I attribute substantial weight to these harms.
45. Whilst I have found the proposal not to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, this is a neutral matter.

46. The proposal would make a positive contribution towards the local economy, through additional spending in the area, and the construction of the proposed development would deliver further temporary economic benefits. The proposal would provide additional self-contained dwellings, would contribute towards the supply of housing in the Borough, and in turn would make a small contribution towards the government's aim to significantly boost the supply of housing. Whilst these benefits attract considerable weight, they would not outweigh the harms identified above.
47. The appellant has referred me to provisions for the redevelopment of vacant land in support of the proposal. However, the appeal site is not vacant, rather it is occupied by a number of existing residential dwellings and therefore I am not satisfied that these arguments materially add to the case in favour of approval. Additionally, whilst I note the reference to compliance with current Building Regulations, this is required under a separate set of legislation, and as such is not a determinative matter for this appeal.
48. Overall, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
49. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed, and planning permission is refused.

R Lawrence

INSPECTOR