



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 May 2025

by **P H Wallace BSc (Hons) DipMS MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/25/3361734

2 Astley, Greys, Thurrock RM17 6UY

- 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 Fokor Uddin against the decision of Thurrock Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01319/HHA.
 - The development proposed is “conversion of garage into habitable space/annexe for a growing family and replacement of garage shutter doors with fenestration”.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for, “conversion of garage into habitable space/annexe for a growing family and replacement of garage shutter doors with fenestration” at 2 Astley, Greys, Thurrock RM17 6UY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/01319/HH, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The development was originally described as, “Garage converted into habitable space/Annexe for growing family”. The Council amended this for clarity and to include the proposed changes to the exterior of the garage. I agree that this more accurately reflects the proposal and have therefore adopted the description as set out above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on highway safety, with particular regard to the provision of parking.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached four-bedroom dwelling fronting the road at a point some 30m from the entrance into Astley, a narrow residential street. Similarly designed and arranged properties of a mixed typology adjoin, served by garage, driveway and forecourt parking. In at least two locations, garages appear to have been converted to living accommodation. ‘Informal’ parking also takes place within properties on narrow incidental paved areas running parallel to the road between the front wall of dwellings and the back of the footway. At the time of my site visit, several cars were so parked, including one at the appeal site. Both sides of Astley have single yellow lining with a one hour no waiting restriction for cars (between 12noon and 1pm) allowing for on-street parking outside this period.

5. The appeal site is in an accessible location, with Greys railway station and the town centre just over a 10min/800m walk away and bus services and a main supermarket some 300m/400m away by foot. The routes are convenient for walking as the terrain is reasonably level, with surfaced footpaths either side of the road having good width and incorporating standard highway features to aid walking such as dropped kerbs at crossing points and tactile paving.
6. The appeal property benefits from a small single detached garage which adjoins the dwelling in the rear/side garden with a parking space in front. The proposal would involve the conversion of the garage, leaving a single parking space on the drive. The new accommodation is described as an annexe.
7. Policy PMD8 of the Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) requires development to comply with relevant car parking standards. These are set out in the Parking Design and Development Standards (February 2022) and indicate that for a property in this location two spaces should be provided.
8. The appellant claims that the existing garage parking space is underutilised. The available evidence indicates that the internal dimensions of the garage fall well below the Parking Standards' minimum requirement (3.0m x 7.0m). Under these Standards, a garage that does not meet this threshold is not classified as a usable parking space. On this basis, it is reasonable to consider the garage as substandard and no longer suitable as a practical parking space, as such a useable parking space would not be lost.
9. The Highway Authority advise that, as the proposed annexe would have a separate access, it should be considered equivalent to a flatted development, thereby requiring an additional parking space. While the annexe would increase the overall accommodation on-site, the appellant's reference to its intended use (for a growing family/for use by the one household), combined with its very modest floorspace, suggest it would function similar to an additional room with facilities in the dwelling still being accessed, rather than as a fully self-contained annexe with independent accommodation akin to a small flat.
10. In this case, I do not consider that any notable parking demand would result from the proposed annexe in a location which offers opportunities to reduce reliance on private vehicles through accessible walking routes and public transport options.
11. Even so, should additional on street parking occur, the Council has raised concerns about the potential for vehicles to obstruct the footway and highway at a bend in the road close to the site, potentially disrupting traffic flow and posing risks to both highway and pedestrian safety. While the appeal site is positioned on the inside of a bend, this is gradual and retains good visibility. Additionally, the road's design and layout should encourage moderate vehicle speeds. I also note vehicles can already park in this location due to the limited nature of the waiting restriction.
12. For the reasons given, I conclude the proposal would not result in an increased risk to highway safety through the parking of additional cars on the highway. Therefore, the proposal accords with Policies PMD8 and PMD9 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) (2015) which requires development to comply with relevant car parking standards and avoid compromising road safety. It would also accord with the National Planning Policy Framework which also seeks to ensure highway safety.

Other Matters

13. The Council is satisfied the development would be of a suitable design and would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbours and I find no substantive evidence which leads me to a different conclusion.

Conditions

14. The conditions imposed are those which have been suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. I have also imposed a condition requiring the finishing materials to match the existing dwelling in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, I have imposed a condition requiring that the annexe remain ancillary to the existing dwelling and not be used as a separate residential unit or for any commercial purpose. This serves a legitimate planning purpose by safeguarding the residential character of the area, protecting the living conditions of occupiers including preventing the formation of an undersized, self-contained unit of accommodation and avoiding additional traffic and parking pressures.
15. The application is supported by an Environment Agency Householder Flood Risk Form. For the avoidance of any doubt, I have also included a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Householder and other minor extensions in Flood Zones 2 and 3 form) to ensure appropriate flood risk management given the proposal is Flood Zone 3.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

PH Wallace

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details: Drawing Numbers A.101.01 (Location Plan and Existing Floor Plans & Elevations), A.102.01 (Location Plan and Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations), A.103.01 (Block Plan) and AG104.01 (Proposed parking & Site Plan).
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
- 4) The outbuilding hereby permitted shall only be used for purposes ancillary and incidental to the residential occupation of the single dwelling known as 2 Astley, Grays, Essex, RM17 6UY. The outbuilding shall remain within the same planning unit and shall not be subdivided physically with fences, walls or other means of enclosure. Under no circumstances shall any part of the development hereby permitted be used as a separate independent unit of residential accommodation from the main dwelling, nor shall the development be used for any commercial use.
- 5) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the flood risk mitigation measures outlined in the completed Environment Agency form 'Householder and other minor extensions in Flood Zones 2 and 3' submitted as part of the application. These measures shall be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and retained thereafter.

End of Schedule