



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2025

by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/25/3360998

Longridge, 2 London Road, Harrow-on-the-Hill, London HA1 3HD

- 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 Create Asset Management against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref is PL/0272/23.
 - The development proposed is erection of a 4 no storey side extension, rear extension and internal reconfiguration of existing building to provide 8 no residential dwellings (4 no existing units reconfigured and 4 no new units) with basement car park, cycle parking, refuse storage and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has provided revised plans that include annotations to indicate walls within the proposed side extension would meet acoustic specifications. A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has also been submitted. These drawings and the NIA were not with the Council at the time of its decision on the planning application leading to this appeal. However, the Council has had the opportunity to submit comments on these documents through the appeal process and they do not fundamentally change the proposed development. I am satisfied no injustice would be caused by considering these additional documents in my assessment.
3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been issued since the Council's decision. The main parties have had the opportunity through the appeal process to submit comments on the Framework and I have taken it into account.
4. The Council is in the process towards adopting a new local plan to replace the Harrow Core Strategy 2012 (CS) and the Harrow Development Management Policies 2013 (DMP). I am uncertain whether the policies of the emerging local plan are subject to outstanding objections or whether they might change before formal adoption. Consequently, I attach only limited weight to the emerging policies in my assessment.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are (i) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Sudbury Hill Conservation Area (the CA) as well as

its effect on non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs), and (ii) whether the development would provide acceptable living conditions in terms of noise.

Reasons

Effects on character and appearance of the area, on the CA and on NDHAs.

6. The CA covers a largely residential area based around London Road and Sudbury Hill. From the submissions, it is apparent the significance of the CA derives partly from the architectural and historic interest of many of the properties. These vary in age, size and appearance but many originate from the Victorian period. From the streets, buildings are often seen alongside, in front of or behind mature trees that provide a pleasant, vegetated nature to the CA. I am also advised the site lies in a defined Area of Special Character although I am referred to no CS or DMP policies that specifically relate to such areas.
7. Longridge is in the CA. It is a Victorian building with a tall stucco frontage near to the pavement. The height of the building as well as the consistent pattern of fenestration provide Longridge's frontage with a strong vertical emphasis and an attractive formal appearance. The Council has defined the property as a locally listed building and it is of sufficient interest to be a NDHA.
8. A link set back from the road forms an attachment between Longridge and a pair of similar dwellings called Kingsley House and Edgehill. From the street, these buildings are a mirror image of each other and they strongly reflect the proportions and the architecture within the front of Longridge. As such, they are also identified as being locally listed buildings and so they too are NDHAs. As a group, Longridge, Kingsley House and Edgehill display a marked similarity in terms of their height and relationship with the road as well as the position, size and style of the fenestration to the front. The line of properties is prominent within the street and they make a positive contribution to the interest and qualities of the CA due to the uniformity in their design and the retention of their original form and features.
9. The proposed side extension would be on land that is currently a hard surfaced parking area and sloped drives. Most of the front elevation of the side extension would be set back slightly behind the existing frontage, so it would be screened to a degree by the adjoining buildings when approaching the appeal property from the south. Nonetheless, the extension would be clearly visible from the street outside the appeal site and when approaching from the north. It would appear particularly prominent to those waiting at the bus stop on the other side of the road and directly opposite the appeal site. Therefore, the side extension would have an obvious visual effect on the character and appearance of the street, the CA and the setting of the identified NDHAs.
10. The side extension would fill most of the space between the existing flank wall of Longridge and the side boundary of the site. It would follow the existing style and the fenestration alignment on the frontage of the main part of the appeal property. However, whereas the existing frontage contains 3 windows equally spaced on each of the first and second floors (with further windows on the set back link) the proposed extension would be wider so as to accommodate 5 windows. As a consequence, the side extension would significantly and obviously increase the width and bulk of the appeal property. Accordingly, it would not appear subservient to the host property, despite it being set slightly further back from the road. Also, the side addition would introduce a strong horizontal emphasis to the front of the

property and so it would spoil and detract from the original form and vertical emphasis to Longridge's principal elevation.

11. Moreover, the side extension would result in the overall frontage of the appeal property containing more windows than the front of Kingsley House and Edgehill as a pair. Also, the set back position of most of the front elevation of the extension would be at odds with the main parts of Longridge, Kingsley House and Edgehill. Currently, the line of properties is not symmetrical due to Longridge being a single property attached to a pair of houses. However, the consistency in the widths and appearances of Longridge, Kingsley House and Edgehill as individual dwellings partially helps offset this imbalance. The side extension would lead to a more obvious variance within the group and so it would be unsympathetic to the NDHAs.
12. The appellant suggests there was an historic intention to add another building to the side of Longridge. Even if this was the case, there is little evidence of any plan to erect an addition of the size and width as now proposed. In any event, my assessment must be based on the effect of the proposal in relation to the existing situation rather any past intention that has not come to fruition.
13. The front of the side extension would include architectural features that reflect those seen on Longridge, Kingsley House and Edgehill. However, the garage style door to the car lift would appear unusual and at odds with the Victorian style of the appeal property and the row of buildings. I am unconvinced the door would appear as a traditional carriage gate as suggested given that it would form part of the front elevation. The forward position of the car lift door would emphasise its incongruity. As a consequence, this element would detract from the historic and architectural interest of the NDHAs. The fact that there are other properties with garages within the local area fails to address or justify the particular harmful effect of this unusual feature within the context of the appeal property and its neighbours.
14. The development would lead to the loss of the car parking area and access ramps to the side of Longridge. To a limited degree, this part of the appeal site detracts from the character and appearance of the CA and the architectural and historic interest of the NDHAs. However, the fairly open nature of the parking and access area allow views from the road of tall trees to the rear of the site that add to the natural qualities of the street. The side extension would largely obscure views of these trees and instead it would result in a prominent, wide and tall building facing onto the road. The loss of openness and reduction in the influence of trees on the street scene would detract from the qualities of the CA to such an extent so as to outweigh the limited benefits in terms of removing the unattractive parking, accesses and associated structures. The fact that trees and hedges on the adjoining site to the north would be unaffected by the development fails to overcome the detriment caused in these respects.
15. The side extension would avoid Longridge from appearing uncharacteristically cramped as it would be an addition to an attached line of dwellings. For the same reason it would not be markedly at odds with the general pattern of development in the locality. Moreover, the existing flank wall of Longridge is fairly bland in appearance due to the high ratio of brickwork to glazing. The flank wall of the proposed side extension would include more windows as well as a chimney that would add visual interest to the building. However, any benefits to the street scene in these respects would be fairly minor and they would fail to address or to justify the identified harmful effects of the development.

16. The proposed rear extension would be of an irregular form and with fenestration that generally follows no pattern. It would also contain balconies and materials such as aluminium window frames, fair faced bricks and pre-cast constituted stone. Therefore, it would fail to meaningfully reflect the style and appearance of the front of Longridge and the adjoining properties. However, the rear elevation would be hidden from public view and the balconies that would project out from the back of the building would not be seen from the street. Moreover, it would be difficult to see the extension from private land due to its relationship with trees and other buildings to the back of the site. Therefore, the rear extension would avoid an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area and it would safeguard the significance of the CA and the NDHAs.
17. Nonetheless, for the reasons as set out above, I conclude the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and that it would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Moreover, it would have a harmful effect on the setting and the significance of the identified NDHAs. In these respects, the proposal would not accord with CS policy CS1 parts (B) and (D), DMP policies DM1 and DM7 and policies D3 and HC1 part (C) of the London Plan 2021 (the LonP). Amongst other things these policies seek to ensure development avoids detriment and responds positively to its local and historic context. The Council's refusal reasons also refer to LonP policies D1, D11 and D12 but these contain no provisions relevant to these issues.

Living conditions and noise.

18. Access and egress for vehicles to the proposed basement parking area would be via the car lift. The Council's concern is that noise from the lift would disturb the residents of the adjoining ground floor apartment.
19. The NIA explains noise level readings taken from an existing car lift and how these have been used to assess the noise effects of the proposed lift on the nearest apartment. The NIA recommends a specific construction for the walls between the lift and the apartment to help address transfer of noise and vibration. Also, mitigation measures are suggested to address noise from the parking area and the lift from unduly affecting living conditions within the development as a whole. Such measures could be secured through the imposition of planning conditions.
20. The Council has not sought to dispute the findings of the NIA. Accordingly, I conclude the development would provide acceptable living conditions in terms of noise. In these regards, it would accord with DMP policy DM1 and LonP policy D3 part D7. Amongst other things, these policies look to ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity, particularly in terms of noise. Acceptability in these regards is a neutral factor in my overall assessment.

Other Matters and Heritage and Planning Balance

21. The proposal would provide acceptable living conditions but the harms identified in respect of the first main issue means it would not accord with the development plan when read as a whole. It follows to consider whether any other factors indicate planning permission should be granted contrary to the development plan.
22. The proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA as only a small part would be affected by the development. In such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the Framework dictates the harm should be weighed against the

public benefits of the scheme. I am also mindful of the duty placed on me by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. Paragraph 216 of the Framework requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm to the significance of the NDHAs.

23. The proposal would help meet the objective set out at paragraph 61 of the Framework to boost the supply of homes. The dwellings would be within a reasonable walking distance of local facilities and public transport services with links to the wider area. The development would make a more effective use of land within a settlement and so it gains support from the provisions of paragraph 125 of the Framework. Also, it would generate construction employment and residents would support local businesses. The proposal would allow the upgrade of the environmental credentials of the building. It would also allow all the proposed flats to be fully accessible through the introduction of a ramped access to the entrance and a lift. As such, it would advance equality of opportunity for those who share a protected characteristics and those who do not in line with the public sector equality duty as set out in The Equality Act 2010. All of these benefits add support for allowing the appeal.
24. In my assessment under the first main issue, I have found the proposal would lead to an enhancement of the CA in terms of removing the parking and accesses to the side of Longridge as well as providing a more interesting side elevation compared to the existing situation. However, these public benefits attract limited weight given the identified harmful effects of the proposal in other regards.
25. Under the terms of paragraph 212 of the Framework, great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset even if less than substantial harm would be caused to its significance. The detriment that would be caused to the character, appearance and significance of the CA attracts considerable weight in my overall assessment. In addition, I attach significant weight to the identified harm that would be caused to the appearance and setting of the NDHAs, particularly as the effects of the proposed side extension would be obvious from the street.
26. Overall, I find the public benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the significance of the CA. Moreover, on balance I find the harm to the significance and setting of the NDHAs would also outweigh the advantages to the scheme. Consequently, there are insufficient grounds to allow the appeal contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

Conclusion

27. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathan Edwards

INSPECTOR