Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2025

by N Perrins MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/25/3361467
2 Whitton Avenue East, Greenford, Ealing UB6 0PU

- 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 Charan Dayal Singh and Savita Singh against the decision of The London Borough of Ealing.
- The application Ref is 241784FUL.
- The proposed development is redevelopment and extension of existing semi-detached houses to provide 7 residential units; and construction of pair of two semi-detached houses (total of 9 residential units); and associated landscaping, cycle parking, car parking, and refuse storage (following demolition of existing annex).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2024. The updated Framework does not raise any new matters that have not already been covered by the parties' submissions to this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on (i) the character and appearance of the area, (ii) the living conditions for occupiers of the property, and (iii) highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site consists of a pair of semi-detached dwellings and annexe building positioned on a corner plot with Whitton Avenue East and Bridgewater Road. The existing buildings feature brick construction and two-storey front projecting wings under hipped roofs. The areas immediately to the north and west are residential, with semi-detached dwellings of similar layout and design. To the east, across Bridgewater Road, there are blocks of flats in neo-Georgian style with pitched or flat roofs, partially screened from street view by mature vegetation.

5. The proposed development involves demolishing the existing annexe and extending and altering the current two-storey semi-detached dwellings to create a three-storey block containing seven dwellings. A pair of semi-detached dwellings

would be constructed on the garden area facing Bridgewater Road. Provision would be made for car and cycle parking, amenity space, and bin storage.

6. I am aware that the appellant engaged in pre-application discussions and is of the view that the design subject of this appeal was steered and informed by the advice provided by the Council; The Council disputes this. Notwithstanding the difference of opinion over the advice given in the pre-application discussions, I have assessed the appeal proposal before me on its own merits as I am required to do.

7. A key characteristic of the pattern of development in the area is the mainly symmetrical and orderly layout of buildings. In contrast, the proposed main block would have a semi-horseshoe layout with front projecting bays with then a gap to the proposed semi-detached dwellings. This approach would result in an asymmetrical arrangement of development on the site as it turns the corner from Whitton Avenue East to Bridgewater Road. The incongruent layout of the main block derives mainly from the different depths of the proposed extensions. Although symmetry is not explicitly mandated for new developments, it is a characteristic of the local context to which a development on this site should seek to respond to in view of its prominent corner location.

8. The layout would also result in an overly complex roof profile with too many variations and valleys, contrasting markedly with the simple, uniform roofs of neighbouring properties. There is also inconsistency in the plans regarding the number of dormers, adding further uncertainty about the roof's appearance. While reference is made to varied roof profiles on flats along Bridgewater Road, those buildings are grouped differently in a different context to the appeal site, which is more closely related in character terms to the nearby semi-detached houses.

9. Moreover, the two-storey side extension facing Whitton Avenue East would not integrate well with the front section due to the sharp change in heights and different roof design; it would appear as an unrelated bolt on to the three-storey section rather than a cohesive part of the design. Contrastingly, there is then not any height transition on the main block section that would front onto Bridgewater Road, which further accentuates the piecemeal and inconsistent approach to design.

10. Additionally, the layout results in outdoor amenity spaces for the units being allocated inconsistently throughout. This differs from the established pattern in the area, where dwellings, including flats, typically have proportionately sized gardens or outdoor amenity spaces. Although the gardens would not be highly visible from public viewpoints, it does not justify the proposed layout being so markedly out of keeping with the established spatial pattern of development in the area.

11. Overall, whilst I agree that the corner location provides the opportunity to accommodate additional scale and bulk on the plot, the design and its approach to layout, roof profile and height transitions lacks the required coherence to its immediate context. Together, the issues identified would result in a discordant form of development on a prominent part of the street scene that would unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the area.

12. I do acknowledge, however, that the proposed layout would broadly respect the existing building lines on both Whitton Avenue East and Bridgewater Road. The overall approach to architectural detailing and appearance of both the main block and semi-detached dwellings would also appear as appropriate for its suburban

context. Nevertheless, these positive aspects do not outweigh or justify the harm caused by the other design issues identified with the scheme.

13. To conclude, the proposed development would not assimilate successfully with the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan 2021 (LP) and Policies 7.4 and 7B of the Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document 2013 (EDMP), which require development to deliver good design by taking a design-led approach to optimise site capacity and ensure it is the most appropriate form for the site, complement the street sequence and building pattern on the area and achieve high quality architecture. The development also does not meet the requirements of Paragraph 135 of the Framework for development to be sympathetic to local character.

Living conditions

14. Policy D6 of the LP establishes minimum internal space standards for residential development. The Greater London Authority published a Housing Design Standards London Plan Guidance in 2023 (LPG) to provide further explanation for how Policy D6 is to be applied. It is clear from the submitted plans that the dwellings would comply with the proposed space standards in terms of gross internal floor area and bedroom sizes.

15. The Council, however, contend that the plans do not clearly depict that the built in storage space standards required by Policy D6 would be met for each proposed dwelling. The loft space is also identified as being able to provide additional storage space for residents albeit without any detail provided to confirm how this would operate in practice. Notwithstanding, it is evident that there is sufficient internal space within the proposed units for the built in storage standards to be met. This could be rectified through a revised plan or a suitably worded condition to require further information to be provided for how the communal space would work or to secure built in wardrobes where necessary.

16. The living areas for Units 3 and 4 being would be next to communal space that could affect their privacy and light. In response, the appellant contends that this could be partly resolved through occupants installing half height shutters. Whilst that could be a solution, the issue really should be designed out at this stage. It is a further indicator that the layout in this case is not acceptable given the various unacceptable planning harms it derives such as on the living conditions for Units 3 and 4.

17. Both Policy D6 of the LP and Policy 7D of the EDMP sets out the standards for private amenity space. Units 6, 7, 8 and 9 are significantly below the minimums required by Policy D6 of the LP and Policy 7D of the EDMP. The appellant contends that the oversized internal space for these units, in conjunction with the proposed balconies for each flat, would compensate for this. However, I cannot seen any mention in either Policy D6 of the LP or Policy 7D of the EDMP that supports this approach.

18. Moreover, no evidence is before me that demonstrates how the oversized internal space would be effective in offsetting the requirements for private outdoor space in terms of future occupant's living conditions. I am, therefore, not satisfied that seeking to conjoin internal and external space to address the requirements for private outdoor amenity space is acceptable or supported by the development plan

that clearly differentiates between the need to provide adequate provision of internal and external space.

19. Furthermore, the garden areas for Units 3 and 4 would be accessed from bedrooms rather than the main living space, which is not an ideal arrangement for future occupants. The garden areas would also be enclosed by the proposed building layout that would restrict access to daylight and sunlight. When both these issues are considered together, I find that the ground floor garden areas would unacceptably detract from the living conditions for future occupants of these units.

20. To conclude, for the reasons set out the proposed development is contrary to Policy D6 of the LP and Policy 7D of the EDMP. These policies require development to deliver appropriate amenity and have regard to the amenities of occupants. The proposal also does not meet the requirements of Paragraph 135 of the Framework, which requires development to achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Highway safety

21. The proposal would be served by three different crossover access points; one would widen an existing crossover in front of No 4 Whitton Avenue East, one using the existing crossover from Bridgewater Road that serves the existing properties and a new access onto Bridgewater Road.

22. The proposed widening of the existing crossover on Whitton Avenue East would bring the access point closer to an existing bus stop. I note that the extended part of the access would only serve one dwelling where movements would be expected to be low. The appellant also contends that bus drivers would be able to see manoeuvres as they occur due to the straight road and good sightlines. However, even with this in mind, this does not categorically confirm it would be a safe arrangement.

23. As I observed on my site inspection, the road is generally busy with traffic from vehicles travelling along the road as well as from vehicles leaving or entering the highway from the adjacent properties. This creates a level of existing distraction for bus drivers to navigate. Without any technical evidence before me that confirms otherwise, this has the potential to be unnecessarily exacerbated by adding an additional access and egress very close to the bus stop even if resulting movements were low. I also note that Transport for London have raised a concern over the proposed arrangement and increase in risk of conflict with various users of the highway, which is not resolved by the information presented. Therefore, I find that it has not been demonstrated that the proposed access for Unit 5 would have an acceptable impact on highway safety.

24. The existing access and crossover from Bridgewater Road would be used to serve the block of flats, with one more space provided than existing. I agree with the appellant that the arrangement would likely be an improvement over the existing situation where cars currently must reverse out. However, as with Unit 5 there is no technical evidence presented that confirms this would be the case including confirming there is sufficient space in the parking area to enable cars to leave in forward gear. I am, therefore, unable to conclude whether access to the main block would be safe in highway terms.

25. The proposed new crossover onto Bridgewater Road would be located near a fire hydrant. However, the cars would be parked away from this on the proposed driveway. As such, I find it unlikely that this crossover would result in an unacceptable level of obstruction in practice given the separation that would exist between the proposed off-street parking and where the fire hydrant is located near to the kerb. As with the other crossovers, however, there is no evidence before me that categorically confirms this.

26. In conclusion, the evidence before me does not adequately demonstrate that the development would be safe in highway terms. Accordingly, the development is contrary to Policies T3 and T4 of the LP and Paragraph 116 of the Framework.

Other Matters

27. Objections have raised concerns over the impact of the development on drainage, noise, air pollution from increased vehicles and impact on local amenities. I am satisfied that the issues raised regarding drainage and noise could be addressed through imposition of suitably worded conditions. Air pollution from vehicles would also not be justification for refusing planning permission on this issue alone when considering the proposal accords with the parking standards set out in Policy T6.1 of the London Plan. There is also no evidence that demonstrates that the scale of development would give rise to unacceptable pressure on local amenities, particularly when the scheme would pay Community Infrastructure Levy.

28. The Council has raised a concern that the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan would fail to achieve the required net gain of 10%. From the information before me, this could be resolved with further information and not a matter determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

29. The Council can currently only demonstrate 3.9 years of housing supply at the present time, which is below the requirement set out in the Framework. In these circumstances, the Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in Paragraph 11 (d) is engaged, which requires any adverse impacts of granting planning permission to be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the benefits when assessed against the Framework taken as a whole.

30. I have identified that the proposal would not accord with several policies in the development plan by not presenting good quality design that would assimilate with local character or provide suitable living conditions for future occupants in terms of external space. It has also not been demonstrated that the development would be served by safe access arrangements and not result in adverse impacts on highway safety in the local network. These policies are consistent with the Framework that seeks to secure well designed places that are sympathetic to local character and provide suitable living conditions as well as for development to not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. I give significant weight to the conflict with the Framework's policies in this regard.

31. In terms of benefits, the proposal would provide an additional seven dwellings on a previously developed small site in a context where there is a housing land supply deficit, all of which is consistent with policies in the Framework. However, the benefits from this would be relatively limited due to the small contribution that the development would have in addressing the Council's housing supply deficit.

32. Accordingly, I find that the benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the harm I have identified from the proposal in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area, the living conditions of future occupants and on highway safety. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with the development plan when read as a whole.

33. For the reasons given, I dismissed the appeal.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR