



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2025

by **John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/25/3369069

20 Granville Avenue, Hounslow, TW3 3TF

- 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 Tariq Mahmood against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/0056.
 - The development proposed is use of rear shed as residential unit ancillary to the existing dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application form described the proposal as '*Retrospective planning application for retention for use of rear shed as residential unit ancillary to the existing dwelling house*'. However, retention is not an act of development and S55 of the 1990 Act makes no distinction between proposals for development and those made retrospectively. This is reflected within the description of development used in the banner heading above.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area having specific regard to its occupancy, and upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a brick built, single-storey outbuilding with a flat roof at the foot of the rear garden to No 20, a two-storey dwelling located at the end of a short terrace within a residential neighbourhood comprising predominantly semi-detached and terraced homes dating from the interwar years of the 20th century. There is a wide access to the side of the appeal site between No 20 and the unattached neighbour at No 22. This turns and runs behind the terraced row to give shared access from Granville Avenue to the bottom end of the rear gardens at Nos 12-18 (even). There is a gated entrance to No 20 from the side access route which leads to the property's garden patio area positioned between the rear elevation of the dwelling and the outbuilding.

5. The appellant has stated that the outbuilding was constructed in 2016 to support the needs of the household and the Council's officer's report confirms that the building lawfully exists. By way of its design, size, form, and position it appeared to me as a typical incidental residential outbuilding within its rear garden setting, and reflective of other similar buildings to the rear of properties within the locality, as evidenced within the appellant's submissions. I found nothing about its visual presence to be intrusive or out of keeping with the wider character or appearance of the area.
6. At the time of my visit, the building was laid out as shown on the application drawings as a single floorspace save for a shower/wet-room in one corner equipped also with a toilet and sink. In the main space there was a bed and desk, with a tv, and a kitchen area to the side with countertops and cupboards, including a sink, fridge/freezer, washing machine, and extractor hood, but no cooker or hob.
7. The appellant has outlined the occupants' family circumstances and the poor health of a family member. During my visit, it appeared that the outbuilding was in use at that time to provide remedial care and was functioning effectively as an annexe to the main dwelling. However, I am in no doubt that, given the range of facilities available within the building, it could also function as a separate dwelling with only little modification to make this so.
8. The planning application as it was made, first and foremost described the proposal as use of the shed (outbuilding) as a '*residential unit*'. This does not, to my mind, clearly describe a use that would be part and parcel of the existing dwelling but instead implies a separate dwelling in its own right. Contrary to an assertion made within the appellant's grounds of appeal, the description of development on the application form does not reference an annexe.
9. I am mindful that the description of the proposal also references a use '*ancillary to the main house*', but the outbuilding as it exists could lawfully function in this manner. I do not take this part of the description to be determinative in defining the development that is proposed. Neither is it unreasonable to consider how the building may function, regardless of the submission being made and considered as a household application, especially in light of section 8 of *The Hounslow Character, Sustainability and Design Codes SPD Part A5 Residential Extension Guidelines* (May 2024). This deals with residential outbuildings and clearly states the Council will refuse any application that proposes an independent residential unit or has been designed in a way that may facilitate future use in such a manner. I am not satisfied that the description of development is precise and therefore, regardless of how the building may currently function in association with No 20, I do not share the appellant's confidence that the proposal before me does not concern the creation of an independent dwelling unit.
10. I understand that the scale and position of the building would remain unaltered, but the creation of a separate dwelling at the foot of the garden would be significantly at odds with the pattern of residential development locally, which comprises a traditional street scene of two-storey properties with highway frontages and rear gardens functioning as private amenity spaces with associated paraphernalia. Occupancy of the outbuilding as a separate dwelling would also generate a significantly different pattern of daily activity. This could be further exacerbated by simple modifications to the building, including for example the insertion of a rear door, which would assist wholly independent access from the adjacent footpath. As

a consequence, the building would become obviously distinct from others similar, and the site as a whole would noticeably deviate from its single household nature and of those neighbouring and within the surrounds.

11. Overall, through an intensification of use and increased levels of activity, I find the proposal would be out of keeping with the established character and appearance of the area. It would also have the potential to create uncharacteristic noise and disturbance in a confined area that would diminish levels of amenity the neighbouring occupiers might reasonably expect to enjoy in their private rear garden settings and would thereby be harmful to their living conditions.
12. The proposed use of the outbuilding as an independent residential unit would comprise a form of development the SPD specifically advises against. Moreover, the harm that I have identified means that there would be conflict with Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 as far as between them, and amongst other things, they seek to ensure that development respects the distinctiveness and context of the area, and minimises harm to neighbouring residents. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Other Matters

13. I have noted a number of concerns raised by neighbouring occupiers, including historic allegations relating to past occupancy of the outbuilding. I have also noted the appellant's counter submissions regarding the long-tenanted occupancy of the dwelling by a single family. However, my consideration of this appeal is predicated upon the application as I consider it to have been made. Other matters that have been raised have not been instrumental in my reasoning and findings in relation to the main issues in this case.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR