



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2025

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/25/3374075

26 and 28 Helen Avenue, Feltham, Hounslow TW14 9LD

- 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 and Mrs Ashish Gurung against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application reference is P/2025/1037.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a one-bedroom detached bungalow with basement level, provision of car parking space, refuse/cycle storage, and amenity space, creation of courtyard with associated landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are firstly, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area; and secondly, whether the proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers with particular regard to outlook, light and external amenity space (EAS).

Reasons

3. The proposal is to erect a detached dwelling with accommodation at ground and basement levels on underused land at the rear of 26 and 28 Helen Road, which are a pair of semi-detached properties in a mainly residential area. The new addition would stand alongside 2 Gladstone Avenue, which is a bungalow to one side of the site. The design, height and front build line of the proposal would broadly match those of No 2.
4. The new dwelling would occupy a significant proportion of the land with its rear and side elevations close to the boundaries of the site. With limited space on 3 sides, the proposal would appear overly cramped and squeezed into a restricted plot. This arrangement would be uncharacteristic of the prevailing pattern of existing development in the local area in which buildings generally stand within larger plots and are sited further away from the boundary of their plot. For these reasons, the appeal scheme would be a discordant and unwelcome addition to the local area.
5. That impression would be most pronounced in views from Gladstone Avenue on the immediate approach to the site. From this public vantage point, the new dwelling would appear uncomfortably close to the flank wall of No 2 on one side and the large outbuilding in the back garden of No 26 on the other. The strong

sense of cramped development would also be evident when seen from the upper rear windows of several nearby properties including Nos 26 and 28.

6. From what I saw, the local area, whilst having a coherent residential character, is capable of successfully accommodating a variety of dwellings in terms of size and design. The contrasting layout of buildings along Gladstone Avenue and Helen Avenue illustrate this variety. Some design features of the proposal such as the front gable, pattern of windows and boundary treatment also take their cue from No 2, as would the choice of external materials. However, the overall visual effect of the proposed development would be contrived and unconvincing because the new dwelling would visually jar with the more spacious character of the area.
7. On the first main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policies CC1 and CC2 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (LP). These policies aim to ensure that development maintains or enhances the character of the local area. It is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that development should add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character.

Living conditions

8. The new dwelling would include a single bedroom at basement level that would be served by windows facing into a new lightwell. The modest depth and configuration of the lightwell would restrict views from the bedroom mainly to retaining walls at close range. As a result, the outlook from this habitable room, within which people could be expected to spend a reasonable amount of time, would be unacceptably poor. The inclusion of mirrors or planting within the new lightwell would not successfully mitigate this harmful effect. That some future occupiers may not be deterred by a confined external outlook from the bedroom, this is insufficient reason to allow unacceptable development.
9. Given the position of the bedroom windows below ground level and the proportions of the lightwell it is unclear whether sufficient daylight and sunlight would penetrate this room to avoid it feeling gloomy and uninviting. In the absence of specific evidence to the contrary, such as a detailed assessment of light, I am unable to conclude that the bedroom of the new dwelling would be adequately lit.
10. The external space left around the new dwelling with the built form and the access and vehicle parking arrangements in place would be limited. As a result, the EAS to serve future occupiers would be restricted to a small area at the back of the dwelling and a subterranean front courtyard. Despite being hemmed in by boundary fences and the existing outbuilding at the rear of No 26, the former would still provide some value as useable space for day-to-day activities such as sitting out or drying clothes. While the quality and usability of the proposed EAS would be limited, this concern alone would not justify the refusal of planning permission.
11. Nevertheless, I conclude on the second main issue, that the proposal would not provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. Accordingly, it conflicts with LP Policy SC5 and Policy D6 of The London Plan insofar as they aim to safeguard residential amenity.

Other matters

12. Once built, the proposal would add to the supply and choice of new homes, which has policy support. It would also make efficient use of under-used land. Sustainable design features would be incorporated into the finished dwelling. Soft landscaping has the potential to enhance biodiversity and visually soften the finished development in the local streetscape. However, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

13. Overall, the proposed development conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, including those of the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR