



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2025

by N Teasdale BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/25/3373633

7 Park Drive, Acton, Hounslow, London W3 8ND

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Hangkai Yao against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/1343.
 - The development proposed is retention of the as-built rear dormer and the infill outbuilding in the rear garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for retention of the as-built rear dormer and the infill outbuilding in the rear garden at 7 Park Drive, Acton, Hounslow, London W3 8ND in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/2025/1343, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the above banner heading has been taken from the original application form. The Council's decision notice includes front roof window, and I have determined the appeal accordingly.
3. The proposed development has already taken place onsite. I have therefore determined this appeal on a retrospective basis. As part of my site visit, I was able to see the works that have already taken place on site which do not fully accord with the drawings submitted as part of this appeal. I have therefore determined the appeal based on the plans the Council based its decision on.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - Whether the outbuilding is incidental to the main dwellinghouse; and
 - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing garage and surrounding dwellings, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

Incidental use of outbuilding

5. The appeal site relates to a two storey dwellinghouse located towards the eastern side of Park Drive in Acton. The development relates to the erection of a rear roof extension with front roof window and extension of existing outbuilding in the rear garden.
6. Planning permission was granted on the 18/12/2024¹ for the proposed erection of a single storey infill rear extension, loft conversion with rear dormer and one roof light on front roof slope, one to rear roof slope and a single storey outbuilding in the rear garden. This appeal seeks to regularise the as built variations for this approval, notably a raised dormer structure and an outbuilding constructed with a slightly increased height. This consent is extant and is a material consideration in relation to this appeal.
7. The previous application approved the outbuilding to the rear of the garden and adjacent to the existing garage which had access to the rear. It was to be used as incidental to the main house, and this was secured by condition. The Officer's report explains that on the site visit for the application subject to this appeal, the outbuilding contained a bathroom, and the garage door has been replaced and access prevented internally. It was therefore considered that the outbuilding appeared to be used as living accommodation. The Council explained that this would cause an increase in comings and goings and cause disruption to the neighbours which they found to be unacceptable.
8. The appellant has confirmed that the outbuilding was always designed as an incidental space to the main dwelling, and I understand its use is to be for a gym/studio. While the outbuilding does contain a bathroom, and the garage door has been replaced and access prevented internally, I did not find the space to represent self-contained accommodation. This is because there was no kitchen, bedroom, living area etc and the outbuilding is still reliant on the main dwelling for such purposes.
9. The Council refers to the Residential Extensions Guidelines, 2024 which explains that suitable uses for an outbuilding may include storage, children's playroom, home working space, green house or hobby room. Usually, primary living accommodation, such as a bedroom, bathroom or kitchen would not be allowed. The term usually indicates to me that there is a level of flexibility depending on the site-specific circumstances. In this case, it would not be unreasonable for a gym room to have a bathroom area for convenience etc. An outbuilding with only a bathroom would not lead me to the view that the building was being used as a self-contained unit particularly as it is reliant on the main dwelling for those other uses as set out earlier.
10. As such, the proposed development is in accordance with the overall aims of the guidance which amongst other matters, seeks to ensure that an outbuilding is only used in a manner incidental to the main house. To ensure this, I find it appropriate to apply a condition that the outbuilding should only be used as incidental to the main house.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the outbuilding is incidental to the main dwellinghouse. It does not therefore have an adverse effect on the amenities enjoyed by residents of the area. It accords with Policy SC7 of the Local Plan, 2015 (LP) which seeks to prevent the use of outbuildings as self-contained

¹ P/2024/2862

dwellings. For the same reasons, the development also accords with the Residential Extensions Guidelines, 2024 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) relating to amenity.

Character and appearance

12. The Council explain that the outbuilding was previously approved to match the eaves of the existing garage. It is explained that the outbuilding has been built higher and the eaves has been increased. The difference is however minimal.
13. The site is located within the CA. I therefore have a statutory duty under 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. It requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. I have also had regard to paragraph 212 of the Framework which states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
14. As part of my site visit, I observed many other examples of outbuilding extensions in close proximity of the site which vary in their appearance, size and design. These very much form part of the established character of the area. Many other garage extensions nearby have a very similar configuration/style to that of the appeal site with variations in height and roof form as well as their relationship to the original eaves. The minimal difference in height when viewed in context does not unacceptably draw the eye nor does the appearance of the overall building when taking into account placement of garage doors, materials etc.
15. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the development does not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the existing garage and surrounding dwellings. It therefore preserves the character and appearance of the CA. It accords with Policies SC7, CC1, CC2 and CC4 of the LP which together, amongst other matters, require that all alterations and additions do not harm the existing character of the building and its context. For the same reasons, the development accords with the Policies of the London Plan and the Framework relating to design.

Conditions

16. I have considered the conditions required for this consent taking into account the retrospective nature of the appeal. I find it necessary to impose a plans condition to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the planning permission. As set out earlier, I also find it necessary to condition the use of the outbuilding in order to protect neighbour's living conditions and the character of the area. I do not find it necessary to set out what elements of the building can and cannot be included but rather that its use is not for a self-contained dwelling or business purposes.

Conclusion

17. For the above reasons and having had regard to the development plan as a whole, the appeal is allowed subject to conditions.

N Teasdale

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan Scale 1:1250; As Built Floor Plans, Elevations and Sections
Drawing No. KAS-08-PL03; As Built Floor Plans, Elevations and Sections
Drawing No. KAS-08-PL04.

- 2) The detached single storey outbuilding hereby permitted shall only be used for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the house at '7 Park Drive, W3 8ND' described at the top of this decision letter and for no other purpose (for example, it may not be used as a self-contained dwelling, nor may it be used for business purposes).

End of schedule