



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2018

by Brendan Lyons BArch MA MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th July 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/18/3193125

2 The Thicket, West Drayton UB7 8AS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr A Hussain against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 62276/APP/2017/3449, dated 21 September 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 December 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a new dwelling at 2 The Thicket, West Drayton UB7 8AS in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 62276/APP/2017/3449 dated 21 September 2017, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule attached to this decision.

Main Issue

2. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - the quality of living conditions for future residents, with regard to internal and external space standards;
 - the effect on the safe operation of the highway.

Reasons

3. The Thicket is a short length of road in an outer suburban residential area. No.2 forms the end house of one of the three pairs of semi-detached houses that line one side of the road. The opposite side is lined by a terrace of six houses, with a pair of semi-detached houses at each end. The gable end of No.2 faces onto Heather Lane, which on this side has semi-detached houses similar to the appeal property. On the opposite side there is an open green area in front of a long terrace of houses and flanked by a three-storey block of maisonettes or flats.
4. Permission is sought to erect a new two-storey house attached to No.2, but with its roof turned through 90 degrees so that its gable would face The Thicket. The front wall of the house would stand slightly forward of No.2, and the rear would project beyond the main rear wall of the existing house. The two houses would share the existing footway crossover and access, but with

their own paved area for parking. Part of the rear garden of No.2 would be separated off to provide a garden for the new house.

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property occupies a spacious plot, apparently somewhat larger than other comparable corner plots nearby. I accept the appellant's case that even after the addition of the proposed house, the plot would not appear out of keeping with other corners on the estate, such as the equivalent corner at the far end of The Thicket, and the space around the house would not appear unduly restricted.
6. The rear corner of the proposed house would be marginally nearer to the side boundary than the row of houses to the rear facing Heather Lane. But owing to the curved alignment of this part of Heather Lane, there is scope for flexibility in respect of building lines. The house's corner would be only slightly forward of a projected building line that followed the curve of the road. The layout would be consistent in this respect with the guidance of the Council's HDAS Supplementary Planning Document: *Residential Layouts*, which advises that building lines should relate to the street pattern. In any event, views of the rear of the house would be well screened by a row of conifers on the adjoining plot, and also by mature street trees.
7. The size, scale and gabled roof form of the proposed house would echo those nearby. The design idea of turning the gable to form a "bookend" has clear precedents in the semi-detached houses on the opposite side of The Thicket and in groups of 3 houses on The Coppice. The use of a shared access with parking to the front would also reflect adjoining houses on The Thicket.
8. Subject to the use of carefully matched materials, and to good quality soft and hard landscaping, all of which can be secured by planning conditions, I find that the proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. It would accord with Policies BE13 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two-*UDP Saved Policies* (2012) which respectively require development to harmonise with the existing street scene, and to complement or improve the existing character of the area, and with the guidance of the HDAS Supplementary Planning Document. I find no conflict with Policy BE15, cited by the Council but which relates to the design of extensions. The proposal would also comply with the strategic design objectives of Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One – *Strategic Policies* (2012) and with Policies 3.5 and 7.4 of the London Plan (2016), which seek housing developments of high quality design that respects local character.

Living conditions

9. The Council accepts that the floor area of the proposed house, at 97sqm, would exceed the minimum standard of 93sqm set by Policy 3.5 of the London Plan (2016) for a 3 bedroom 5 person 2 storey house. That figure derives from the national internal space standards¹ introduced following the Written Ministerial Statement of March 2015, and the same policy advises that new developments should seek to achieve the other more detailed standards. The appellant acknowledges that the second double bedroom shown on the submitted plans would have a floor area slightly below the 11.5sqm required by the standard.

¹ Set out in *Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard* DCLG March 2015

However, an amended plan² submitted with the appeal shows that with a slight adjustment to the position of a partition wall, both double/twin bedrooms could comply with the standard. As this alteration would be very minor and would affect only the interior arrangement of space, no other parties' interest would be affected by the substitution of the amended plan.

10. The Council accepts that the existing house would retain a private rear garden area well in excess of its 60sqm minimum standard. The proposed house would have a relatively confined private space to the rear, estimated by the Council as 42sqm in area. However, I agree with the Council that the potential to supplement this with a semi-private area of garden to the side of the house, screened by hedges, would provide adequate outdoor amenity space for future residents of the house.
11. The proposal would therefore comply in this respect with Policy BE23 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two, and with Policy 3.5 of the London Plan.

Highways and parking

12. The existing house has had a recently widened footway crossing, which allows access to parking space for two cars. The submitted plans show one car parking space to the front of each of the existing and proposed houses, sharing the access. The Council's concern is that this provision would be inadequate, leading to on-street parking and highway safety issues.
13. An amended plan³ submitted with the appeal shows two cars parked to the front of the proposed house. But the plan is not dimensioned and it was not clear from the site visit that the space would be wide enough to fit two cars. Therefore, I shall not take this plan into account.
14. However, it is not disputed that the parking standard of 2 spaces per dwelling set by Policy AM14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two is a maximum level of provision that is not specific to the size of dwelling. The more recent London Plan sets a lower maximum standard of 1.5 spaces per dwelling. Although the location has a relatively poor PTAL rating, the appellant has provided evidence of frequent bus services linking to enhanced future rail services, and of levels of car ownership in the London area. There are good grounds to conclude that the proposal would not generate significant additional on-street parking demand. I recognise the concerns expressed by the Council and some local residents that owing to the narrowness of local roads and the limited space available, parking stress already exists in the area. However, I find that any additional demand created by the appeal proposal would be unlikely to add to that to an unacceptable degree. There is no evidence that the layout of the site would interfere with forward visibility, as feared by some residents, or that highway safety would be compromised in any other way.
15. I conclude that the proposal would not conflict with Policy AM7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two, which seeks to maintain the free flow of traffic and highway safety, or with the parking requirements of Policy AM14.

² Plan ref 2TT-17161 002 Rev B

³ Plan ref 2TT-17161 001 Rev A

Conditions

16. The appellant has not disputed the need for the conditions proposed by the Council. In addition to the standard commencement time condition, a condition is necessary to require compliance with the approved plans, in order to confirm the approved form of development. I agree that conditions are also necessary, for the reasons already outlined above, to secure approval of the materials to be used and of the landscaping of the site, and that these matters need to be concluded before commencement of development. However, the Council has not provided sufficient evidence to justify a requirement for living walls and roofs. Although a wider footway crossing has now been formed, a condition requiring pedestrian visibility splays would be reasonable in the interests of highway safety, and for the same reason a further condition to secure the future retention of the proposed parking spaces.

Conclusion

17. I find that the appeal proposal would be in accordance with the development plan and supplementary guidance. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to conditions.

Brendan Lyons

INSPECTOR

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Schedule of Conditions Nos. 1-6

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2TT-17161 001; 2TT-17161 002 Rev B; 2TT-17161 003.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details and/or samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and/or samples.
 - 4) No development shall commence until there shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a scheme of landscaping. The scheme shall include details of soft landscaping:
 - a. Planting plans at a scale of not less than 1:100;
 - b. Written specification of planting and cultivation works;
 - c. Schedule of plants giving species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities;and details of hard landscaping:
 - a. Refuse storage;
 - b. Cycle storage;
 - c. Means of enclosure/ boundary treatments;
 - d. External lighting;
 - e. Other ancillary structures;and a schedule for implementation.

The development shall be carried out and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved details and schedule.
 - 5) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with drawing no. 2TT-17161 001 for at least two cars to be parked and those spaces shall thereafter be kept available at all times for the parking of vehicles.
 - 6) The access to the site shall be provided on each side with those parts of 2.4m x 2.4m pedestrian visibility splays which can be accommodated within the site. The visibility splays shall be maintained at all times thereafter free of obstruction to visibility between the height of 0.6m and 2.0m above the level of the adjoining highway.
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