



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2024

by Mark Caine BSc (Hons) MTPL MRTPI LSRA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/24/3342929

18 Mead Road, Hillingdon, Uxbridge UB8 1AU

- 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 Mrs Mandy Barnes against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 68180/APP/2023/3376.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Division of site to construct new 2 bedroom dwelling'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the North Uxbridge Area of Special Local Character (ASLC).

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a roughly rectangular shaped piece of land that is fenced off and located directly to the rear of No 18's back garden area, adjacent to where the Press Road cul-de-sac terminates.
4. The surrounding area is predominantly residential comprising properties of varied age, style and design. Nonetheless, the appeal site's immediate context is characterised by a mixture of 2 storey detached dwellings on the opposite side of Press Road, a single storey outbuilding, and the boundary treatments to the garden areas of housing that fronts onto other streets. These are arranged around the north eastern end of the Press Road cul-de-sac.
5. The appeal site is also located within a ASLC which is identified as a non-designated local heritage asset in Policy DMHB 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) (the Local Plan). This policy states that within an ASLC new development should complement existing materials, design features, architectural style and building heights predominant in the area. It also sets out that new development should reflect the character of the area and its original layout, and that backland development is unlikely to be acceptable.
6. I have been provided with limited information on the ASLC as a whole and its significance. However, based on my site observations, I consider the significance, insofar as this appeal is concerned, to derive from a suburban

housing layout with relatively generous and spacious back garden areas that are located around and in the vicinity of Uxbridge Common (the Common).

7. Other backland development exists in the area and given the site's location to the south-western end of the ASLC, it is not visible from the Common. However, the introduction of the proposed dwelling into this open, undeveloped plot, would increase the built form and density of development across the site, significantly reducing this space. The proposed dwelling would also have a considerably smaller footprint and occupy an uncharacteristically smaller plot than the vast majority, if not all, of other existing nearby dwellings. As a result, the proposal would appear at odds with the prevailing pattern of development and layout of the immediate surroundings.
8. Furthermore, the 1.5 storey height and insertion of a hipped roof dormer within the front roof slope of the proposed dwelling would appear conspicuous in comparison to the larger scale and massing of the 2 storey dwellings on the opposite side of this part of Press Road, and the smaller size, scale and relatively simple form of 13 Fairfield Road's nearby existing outbuilding. Indeed, the impact would be compounded by the proximity of this outbuilding to the front and side elevation of the proposed dwelling, thereby drawing the eye, and further accentuating its discordant effect.
9. Overall, the proposal would thereby not compliment the predominant scale, design and building heights nor reflect the original layout and character of the area. Accordingly, I find that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the ASLC.
10. It thereby conflicts with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies, and Policies DMH 6, DMHB 5, DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHB 18 of the Local Plan. The proposal would also fail to accord with the design objectives of Policies D1, D3 and D6 of the London Plan 2021. These seek, amongst other matters, to ensure high quality design in development that is appropriate to the character of an area, harmonises with local context, and protects historic assets including ASLC's.
11. In similar respects, conflict would arise with advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character.

Heritage Planning Balance

12. The Framework advises that in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
13. I have had regard to a previous appeal decision (APP/R5510/W/22/3309101) on the site where the Inspector found that, broadly speaking, the erection of a dwelling in this location, with a frontage onto Press Road and a side garden area would not appear out of place. However, given its location in an ASLC, and the policy requirement for proposals to reflect local context as well as character, the previous Inspector found that unacceptable harm would be caused in respect of the proposed development's design, scale and massing.

14. Although I am informed the scheme has been revised to take account of the previous Inspector's comments, there appears to be little difference in height between the appeal proposal and the previously dismissed bungalow. Moreover, I continue to find that the proposal would cause harm in respect of its scale, massing and design and that it conflicts with local and national planning policy. As such, the previous appeal decision on the site does not weigh in favour of the proposed scheme.
15. Nor does the presence of a dormer bungalow at No. 6 Press Road. Although the proposal is of a similar design to this property, my site observations confirmed that this is more akin to infill development rather than backland development, sitting in the central part of the built-up Press Road frontage. The dwelling to the rear of 15 Fairfield Road is also a larger building located within a larger plot than the appeal scheme. Accordingly, I do not find the site characteristics of these examples to be directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
16. It has also been put to me that sufficient internal and external space would be provided for future occupiers, that there would be no parking overspill, congestion or access issues or any undue level of overlooking or loss of privacy. Nonetheless, these matters are not in dispute between the main parties and the absence of harm in these respects do not weigh in favour of the proposal.
17. With all of the above in mind, I therefore find that the merits and benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the significance of the heritage asset and the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations that warrant taking a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Mark Caine

INSPECTOR