



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

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Tony Zaman
Chief Executive
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Your reference:
Our reference:

9 February 2024

Dear Tony,

Re. Modification of Article 4 direction in relation to Part 20, Class ZA of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for sites within the London Borough of Hillingdon

Background

As you are aware, with effect from 31st August 2020 Class ZA was inserted into Part 20 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("the General Permitted Development Order").

Class ZA permits development consisting of the demolition of a detached building which, on 12 March 2020, was in use as a block of flats or an office, research and development or light industrial use, or any combination of these uses, and its replacement with a purpose built detached block of flats or a purpose built detached dwellinghouse, with a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, and associated operational development.

On 26th July 2021 the London Borough of Hillingdon made a non-immediate direction under Article 4(1) of the General Permitted Development Order disapplying Class ZA, as set out above, for various sites within the London Borough of Hillingdon ("the Article 4 direction"). The Article 4 direction was confirmed on 14th July 2022 and came into force on 30th July 2022.

The Article 4 direction applies to the following areas of the borough:

- Strategic Industrial Locations
- Locally Significant Employment Locations
- Locally Significant Industrial Sites
- Hotel and Office Growth Locations
- Office Growth Locations
- Hayes Opportunity Area

Consideration and Reasons

In considering the Article 4 direction the Secretary of State has had regard to national policy on Article 4 directions. Paragraph 53 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides that-

The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:

- where they relate to change from non-residential use to residential use, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts (this could include the loss of the essential core of a primary shopping area which would seriously undermine its vitality and viability, but would be very unlikely to extend to the whole of a town centre);*
- in other cases, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities);*
- in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible.*

Paragraph 050 of the Planning Practice Guidance provides that the Secretary of State will only intervene in Article 4 directions where there are clear reasons for doing so. The Secretary of State considers that there are clear reasons justifying his intervention in the Article 4 direction.

The Class ZA permitted development right provides new opportunities for the demolition and replacement of vacant, detached buildings used as blocks of flats, offices, for research and development or in light industrial use, with detached, purpose built flats or a dwellinghouse, to support housing delivery and economic recovery. The permitted development right includes a number of national safeguards: all new residential units delivered through the permitted development right must meet nationally described space standards; the rights do not apply where the footprint of the building to be demolished exceeds 1,000 square metres or the building is higher than 18 metres; the building must have been vacant for at least 6 months; and, there are prior approvals for, amongst other things, the design and external appearance of the new building.

The Article 4 direction, as made, does not take a sufficiently targeted approach in the assessment of the wholly unacceptable adverse impacts of the permitted development right in each location. Such an approach is necessary to ensure that the Article 4 direction applies only to the smallest geographical area possible. The Secretary of State is therefore of the view that the boundaries must now be modified in accordance with the direction attached to this letter.

This will ensure that the Article 4 direction is focused on protecting the most significant areas, where the permitted development right would have a wholly unacceptable adverse impact on economic vitality and viability within the Borough through the loss of employment space.

These modifications will ensure that the Article 4 direction boundaries for areas within the London Borough of Hillingdon are justified by robust evidence and comply with national planning policy.

Decision

The Secretary of State has decided to modify the Article 4 direction to restrict the Article 4 direction to the areas shown on the attached map and I attach a direction to that effect.

Procedural issues

For the purposes of paragraph 1(13) and 1(16) of Schedule 3 of the General Permitted Development Order I hereby notify you of the modification of the Article 4 direction.

Under paragraph 1(17) of Schedule 3, you must give notice of the attached direction in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 1(1) to 1(3) of Schedule 3 of the General Permitted Development Order. You are required to give notice of this direction as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of this letter. Although it is a matter for you, it is suggested that you give notice of the directions in the same manner as for the original form of the direction. In due course, please confirm when and where the notice is published or served so we know the date the direction came into force.



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