

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2016

by Stephen Hawkins MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 20th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3154810

132 Central Avenue, Hayes UB3 2DA

- 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 Mohammad Mansha against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 39711/APP/2016/1700, dated 3 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was made under Section 73A of the Planning Act as the front porch had already been built. I have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the front porch on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The host dwelling is an end of terrace property of a simple, gable fronted design. It is situated in a residential area which largely consists of rows of terraced dwellings of similar age, appearance and materials. The dwellings are set back regular distances from the long, straight, tree-lined street. The above all contributes to the cohesive character and appearance of the area, reflected in the identification of Central Avenue as an Area of Special Local Character (ASLC) in the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan 2012(LP).
 5. The design of the front porch incorporates two unequally sized gables, which lend it a somewhat fussy and imbalanced appearance. Its shallow roof pitch also gives the front porch a rather squat form. The above is all entirely at odds with the simple appearance and steep roof pitch of the host dwelling. Moreover, the brick walls of the porch have a significantly different appearance to the cream rendered walls of the host dwelling.
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6. The front porch is of substantial size, extending across almost all of the front elevation. It therefore appears as a large scale and dominant feature, which fails to respect the proportions of, or be visually subordinate to, the host dwelling. Overall, in combination with its unsympathetic design and materials, the front porch therefore appears as a somewhat alien and visually disruptive addition to the host dwelling when viewed from Central Avenue.
7. The front porch is open to reasonably extensive views along Central Avenue, particularly when approaching the appeal site from the direction of Uxbridge Road. Its scale, design and materials are entirely at odds with the simple design and appearance of the dwellings along either side of this part of Central Avenue, which in general are unencumbered by substantial front porches. Where porches have been added, they are generally small in scale and well related in terms of form and materials to their host dwellings. Consequently, the front porch is also viewed as a rather incongruous feature in the wider street scene along Central Avenue.
8. As a result of all the above, the front porch causes unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the surrounding area. It therefore adversely affects the significance of the ASLC. Consequently, the front porch fails to accord with Policy BE1 of the LP, as it is not of a high quality design that enhances the local distinctiveness of the area and it does not contribute to a sense of place, it has not been designed to be appropriate to the identity and context of Hillingdon's buildings townscapes and views and it does not make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of its form, scale and materials. The front porch also fails to accord with LP Policy HE1, as it would not conserve and enhance the ASLC.
9. Furthermore, the front porch fails to accord with saved Policy BE5 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP), as it would not harmonise satisfactorily with the materials, design features and architectural style predominant in the ASLC. It fails to accord with saved UDP Policy BE13, as it does not harmonise with the existing street scene. The failure of the front porch to harmonise with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building does not accord with saved UDP Policy BE15. The front porch does not accord with saved UDP Policy BE19, because it does not complement or improve the amenity and character of the area.
10. Additionally, because it extends across the frontage, fails to follow the character of the existing building, is not subordinate in terms of its scale and form and harms the visual amenities of the street scene, and; because its roof design fails to match that of the roof of the dwelling, the front porch is therefore inconsistent with the guidance in the Council's adopted Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) 'Residential Extensions' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on front extensions, canopies and porches at 8.1 and 8.2.

Other matters

11. I am given to understand that the appellant has two daughters with disabilities and that the front porch is in part required as a shelter for parking of their wheelchairs. I have therefore had regard to the duty under legislation to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations for persons with disabilities. I accept that there is a small scale

positive impact in terms of equalities as a consequence of providing the front porch.

Planning Balance

12. The front porch has a positive impact in terms of equalities. However, this impact is small in scale and it does not outweigh the unacceptable harm caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the surrounding area and the significance of the ASLC. Consequently, dismissing the appeal would not have a disproportionately negative impact in terms of equalities.

Conclusion

13. The front porch conflicts with the Development Plan and adopted SPD.
14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Stephen Hawkins

INSPECTOR