
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: 24th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3157553

57 Sweetcroft Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 9LF

- 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 M Motiwalla against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 23050/APP/2016/1121, dated 17 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2016.
 - The development proposed was originally described as a front porch, first floor side extension, two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor side extension and two storey rear extension at 57 Sweetcroft Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 9LF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23050/APP/2016/1121, dated 17 March 2016, subject to the conditions in the schedule at the end of this decision.

Procedural Matter

2. Notwithstanding what is shown on the plans, it is clear that the appellant amended the scheme whilst it was under consideration by the Council to withdraw the proposed porch. The Council dealt with the proposal on that basis and so shall I. Therefore, I have omitted reference to the porch in my formal decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The host dwelling is a substantial detached property of hipped roof design, with a projecting central gable forming part of a half timbered front elevation. Previous enlargements to the host dwelling include a 1½ storey side extension. The surrounding area consists of buildings exhibiting a considerable variety in terms of their age, appearance, size and external materials. These include buildings incorporating sections of crown roof and flat roofs.
 5. The host dwelling and other buildings on the same side of the road have rows of mature trees in their front gardens which, together with generous plot sizes, contributes to the leafy and spacious, suburban character of the surroundings.
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The trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The host dwelling and other buildings on the same side of the road are in the Hillingdon Court Park Area of Special Local Character (ASLC) in the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan 2012(LP).

6. The proposed new first floor extension would replace the upper floor of the existing 1½ storey side extension. The eaves level and overall height of the new first floor would be similar to that of the host dwelling. The new first floor would have a hipped roof form, incorporating an area of crown roof. The new crown roof section would be relatively small. A much larger crown roof already forms an integral part of the roof form of the host dwelling. A smaller section also forms part of the existing roof of the 1½ storey extension. Therefore, the roof form of the new first floor would be similar to that of the host dwelling.
7. Moreover, the new area of crown roof would be in line with the highest part of the roof of the host dwelling. Therefore, when viewed from Sweetcroft Lane the crown roof would not be noticeably different to the existing roof form of the host dwelling or easily distinguished from the ridge line of a conventional equal pitched roof. As a result, the increase in the area of crown roof represented by the new first floor would not cause any significant harm to the inherent character of the host dwelling.
8. In terms of other aspects of its design and appearance, the new first floor, which includes a half timbered front elevation, would echo that of the host dwelling. The new first floor would not project forward of the front elevation. It would not involve any further increase in the overall width of the host dwelling. Consequently, the new first floor would respect and reflect the scale and proportions of the host dwelling. It would not visually dominate the host dwelling, create an unbalanced appearance or erode the spacing between buildings.
9. The proposed two storey rear extension would cover the existing rear elevation, filling the space between and above the existing single storey projections at either end. The rear extension would project a limited distance from the main rear wall. It would have a similar eaves level and roof pitch as the host dwelling, but it would have a much lower overall height as it would incorporate a long flat roof section, hidden behind a hipped roof. Where visible from the appeal site or adjoining gardens, the rear extension would therefore be viewed as a relatively small scale and subsidiary addition. Its roof form would be assimilated into the background of the substantial hipped roof of the host dwelling. The visible part of the roof would not look at odds with the roof form of the host dwelling and it would not be viewed as being noticeably different from an equal pitched roof.
10. For all of the above reasons, I find that the proposed extensions would integrate successfully with the inherent character of the host dwelling. They would not appear as overlarge or incongruous additions to the host dwelling when viewed from the surroundings. Moreover, having regard to the variety of built forms in the locality and the absence of any reduction in spaciousness, the extended host dwelling would not appear as an alien feature in views along Sweetcroft Lane. Consequently, the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or its surroundings and it would not adversely affect the significance of the ASLC.

11. Therefore, the proposal would accord with Policy BE1 of the LP, as it is of a high quality design that enhances the local distinctiveness of the area and contributes to a sense of place, it has been designed to be appropriate to the identity and context of Hillingdon's buildings, townscapes and views and it would make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of its form, scale and materials. The proposal would also accord with LP Policy HE1, as it would conserve and enhance the ASLC.
12. Further, the proposal would accord with saved Policy BE5 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP), as it would be in harmony with the materials, design features and architectural style predominant in this part of the ASLC and it would respect the symmetry of the original building. The proposal would accord with saved UDP Policy BE13, as it would harmonise with the existing street scene. It would also harmonise with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building and would thereby accord with saved UDP Policy BE15. The proposal would also accord with saved UDP Policy BE19, because it would complement and improve the amenity and character of the area.
13. Moreover, the proposal would be consistent with the guidance at sections 5.0 and 6.0 of the Council's adopted Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) 'Residential Extensions' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The new first floor would be integrated with the host dwelling, its roof height would be equal to that of the main roof and its width would be considerably less than that of the original house. The rear extension would be subordinate to and not exceed the height of the host dwelling, it would have a similar, pitched roof and it would not project more than four metres. Both proposed extensions would complement the host dwelling in terms of their detailed design and external materials.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard commencement condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans, with the exception of the porch, in the interests of certainty. To ensure a harmonious appearance, I have imposed a condition requiring the external materials of the proposed extensions to match the host dwelling.
15. I have also imposed a condition to safeguard the TPO trees from damage during the construction phase, in order to ensure their continued contribution to public amenity. This must be a pre-commencement condition to ensure that the trees are adequately protected before any construction works begin. However, I have not imposed the Council's suggested condition requiring prior approval for the removal of any trees, hedges and shrubs shown to be retained on the plans. No existing planting is shown on the plans. Any work to planting of public amenity value within the appeal site is protected by the TPO. Therefore, the suggested condition is unenforceable and unnecessary.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Stephen Hawkins

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 030116, 040116, 050116, 060116, 070116 and 1:1250 Location Plan except in respect of the proposed front porch shown on plan Nos 050116, 060116 and 070116.
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
- 4) No development (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) shall commence on site until a scheme for the protection of the existing trees, including a plan showing the location of the protective fencing, and a specification of the type of protective fencing to be erected which accords with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the protective fencing has been erected on site in accordance with the approved details. The protective fencing shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details for the duration of the construction works. No activities or storage of materials shall take place within the areas protected by the fencing.