

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by Philip Lewis BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3156366
21 Manor Road, Ruislip. Hillingdon HA4 7LA

- 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 Mrs Margaret Lemming against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 71722/APP/2016/1124, dated 30 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues for the appeal are:
 - Whether the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on highway safety with particular regard to parking.

Reasons

Character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area

3. 21 Manor Road is situated within the extensive Ruislip Village Conservation Area. I saw during my site visit that the Conservation Area has a mixed character, including commercial properties on the High Street, public buildings such as the Police Station at The Oaks and areas of relatively large houses situated within large plots. During my site visit, I observed that there is some variety in the architectural styles of dwellings within the Conservation Area and particularly along Manor Road.
 4. No 21 is one of a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings of an unusual and distinctive design, which are laid out with projecting hipped gables towards each end, with a narrower element between, which has no first floor windows facing the street. This serves to accentuate the width of the pair, which exhibit a strong symmetry within the street scene. I note that the property is identified within the Ruislip Village Conservation Area Appraisal as being part of a 'good group of houses'.
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5. It is proposed that the existing garage and carport is demolished and a two storey side extension added. The extension would be built of materials to match those existing. The main body of the extension would be constructed with a hipped roof and include 'fixed' garage doors to the front, with a narrow two storey element linking it to the host dwelling.
6. The main body of the extension would present a hipped gable element to the street, which whilst lower in height than the host property, would appear wider than the existing projecting gable. The plans indicate that this element would be about 6.045 metres wide, with the linking element about 2.055 metres wide. In combination, these elements would significantly broaden the width of the property. The Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions (SPD) includes guidance that the width of side extensions should be between half and two thirds of the main house depending upon the plot size and character of the area. In this case, from the dimensions given by the parties, it would appear that the total width of the extension would be towards upper end of this range.
7. I have considered that the ridge height of the extension would be set below that of the original dwelling and that the extension would be behind the front of the dwelling. I have also taken into account that fenestration and external materials would match existing, the emphasis on vertical and horizontal lines in the design and the comments regarding the innovative nature of the proposal. However, I do not find that the proposed extension would be subordinate to the host dwelling due to its excessive width and consequently would fail to respect the architectural composition of the host dwelling.
8. I also find that the appeal proposal would have a detrimental effect upon the street scene due to the significant increase in width of the property and the adverse effect upon the symmetry of the distinctive pair of dwellings. Consequently, the appeal proposal would give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and having found harm to the Conservation Area, I give it considerable importance and weight.
9. Paragraph 131 of the Framework states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. This is in line with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in respect of development affecting conservation areas, which states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. Paragraph 132 of the Framework sets out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the conservation of the asset.
10. Paragraph 126 of the Framework recognises that historic assets are an irreplaceable resource that local authorities should conserve in a manner appropriate to their significance. The harm found in this case would be less than substantial to the extensive Conservation Area as a whole and any harm, which is less than substantial, must be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal. Whilst the harm to an individual site may be less than substantial, the incremental and cumulative harm that could arise from similar proposals could adversely affect the Conservation Area and the heritage asset as a whole. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm requires clear and

convincing justification. However, in this case the alterations relate to a private dwelling and there are therefore no public benefits that would offset the limited harm identified.

11. To conclude on this matter, the appeal scheme would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. The appeal proposal is contrary to Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies Policy BE1 which is concerned with new development improving and maintaining the quality of the built environment and Policy HE1 which is concerned with heritage, including conserving and enhancing conservation Areas. It also conflicts with the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP) saved Policy BE4 which is concerned with development preserving or enhancing Conservation Areas and saved UDP Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 which are concerned with design of development. The proposal also does not accord with the guidance set out in the SPD.

Highway safety

12. I saw at my site visit that the appeal property has a footway crossing leading to an area of hardstanding, a single garage and carport. The appeal proposal involves the demolition of the garage and carport to make way for the extension. I observed that the appeal site is situated within a Controlled Parking Zone and that the road to the front of the appeal property is in part marked out for a parking bay and in part subject to a single yellow line restriction.
13. Saved UDP Policy AM14 sets out that new development will only be permitted where it is in accordance with the Council's adopted car parking standards. The applicable standard is a maximum of 2 spaces provided for curtilage parking. Whilst the existing garage and carport would be lost, the existing hardstanding would be retained. I consider that the existing hardstanding is of a sufficient size to accommodate two parked cars. I observed at my site visit that it may be necessary to alter the site entrance to facilitate this, and should I be minded to allow the appeal, this could be dealt with by way of a planning condition to ensure that any such works did not harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
14. To conclude on this matter, the appeal proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on highway safety and therefore does not conflict with saved UDP Policy AM14 or saved UDP Policy AM7 which include provisions regarding general highway safety. The proposal also does not accord with the SPD in this regard. This does not however outweigh my findings in respect of the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area.

Other matters

15. In reaching my decision I have considered the policies of the development plan and the Framework referenced by the appellant and I have also considered the comments regarding the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbours. I have considered the developments at Nos 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17 and 30 Manor Road which have been referred to me by the appellant. I observed these dwellings during my site visit. I noted that the properties cited were of different designs and differed in appearance to the distinctive appeal property. Whilst I have few details of these developments before me, following

my site visit I am satisfied that they should not provide examples which should enviably be followed given the harm found in this case.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Lewis

INSPECTOR