
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2016

by Christa Masters MA (hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3159627
15 Thornhill Road, Ickenham UB10 8SF

- 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 D Xioutas against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 31885/APP/2016/2461, dated 26 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is roof alterations including hip to half hip roof conversion and rear dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. From the information provided on the planning application form and from what I saw on the site visit, it was apparent that the development had commenced.

Main Issues

3. This appeal has two main issues. Firstly, the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. Secondly, the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site comprises a detached chalet bungalow located within an established residential area. There is an extensive area of hardstanding at the front of the host property and there is a variety of both bungalows and two storey dwellings along Thornhill Road. The appeal property sits forward of No 11 and is significant in width covering almost the entire width of the plot. As a result, it is already a relatively prominent property within this part of the street scene.
 5. My attention has been drawn to policies BE1, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan (LP) 2012. Policy BE1 is a general policy relating to the built environment. It advises, amongst other things that all new development should achieve a high quality design which enhances local distinctiveness. Policy BE13 advises that development will not be permitted if the layout or appearance fails to harmonise with the existing street scene. Policy BE15
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advises that extensions to existing buildings will be permitted where they harmonise with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building. Policy BE19 advises, amongst other things, that new development within residential areas should complement or improve the character of the area.

6. The rear dormer is extensive in both height and width. It covers a large proportion of the rear elevation of the property and is readily visible from Thornhill Road. Due to its size, scale and design, it appears as an excessive addition to the property at odds with the existing roof form and more modest front dormer to the front elevation of the property. As a result of the size and scale of the appeal proposal taken as a whole, it would represent a bulky addition to the property which would dominate both elevations of the property. It would significantly alter the appearance of the roof, and result in a prominent feature to a dwelling which I have already established is prominent within the existing street scene. It would therefore cause material harm to the host property and the street scene as a result.
7. In addition to the above policy context, the Council have also made reference to the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document, Residential Extensions (SPD) 2008. In particular, I note that paragraph 7.5 advises that roof extensions should relate well to the proportions, roof form and massing of the existing house and its neighbours. For the reasons I have set out above, the proposal would in my view fail to address this requirement. I note that the appellant advises the proposal meets some of the requirements identified by the SPD in terms of the set in. Be that as it may, this factor alone does not outweigh the harm which I have identified the proposal would cause to the host property and its neighbours.
8. I therefore conclude on the first main issue, the proposal would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with policies BE1, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the LP.

Effect on the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers

9. The Council's concerns in this regard relate to the positioning of the gable window. Although the Council have not identified which neighbouring properties they consider would be effected by the proposal, Bellamy Close, which consists of semi detached and detached dwellings, runs along the side of the appeal property. As a result, the rear gardens to a number of these properties abut the appeal site.
10. I have noted the representations received from the occupiers of No 32 Bellamy Close. The appellant has advised that the window concerned serves a stairwell, and that a condition could require the windows to be fitted with obscure glazing and fixed shut. Given the separation distances involved between the host property and the adjoining dwellings along Bellamy Close, I am of the view that an appropriately worded condition could be used to satisfactorily address the issue of overlooking and loss of privacy.
11. I therefore conclude on the second main issue, the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the living conditions of the adjoining properties. As such, the proposal would accord with policies BE21 and BE24 of the LP. Policy BE21 advises that planning permission will not be granted for new buildings or extensions which would result in a significant loss of residential amenity. Policy

BE24 goes onto note that the design of new buildings should protect the privacy of the occupiers and their neighbours.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Christa Masters

INSPECTOR