

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2016

by Kevin Gleeson BA MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3162051

61 Belmont Road, Uxbridge UB8 1QT

- 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 Bashirul Islam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 16359/APP/2016/2621 dated 6 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as conversion of roof space into a habitable incorporating a rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development used by the Council in its decision letter was *conversion of roof space into a habitable use to include two rear dormers and two front roof lights*. This more accurately describes the proposal than that provided on the application form, and used above.
3. As the appellant indicated in their statement, within *Proposed Plans and Elevations Rev B* a flat roof dormer extending across most of the rear roof slope was shown. I acknowledge that this conflicts with the proposed elevation and does not represent the scheme for which planning permission was sought. I have dealt with the appeal on the basis of the design shown in the proposed elevation.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property comprises a retail use at ground floor and a residential flat at first floor. The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential uses with properties of different ages, footprints and designs. The appeal property is within the North Uxbridge Area of Special Local Character (ASLC).
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6. It is proposed to convert the existing roof space within the appeal property into an additional bedroom for the first floor flat through the introduction of two front roof lights and two rear dormers.
7. Policy BE5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (November 2012), (the Local Plan) states that within an ASLC new development should harmonise with the materials, design features, architectural style and building heights predominant in the area and that extensions to dwellings should respect the symmetry of the original building. Paragraph 1.20 of the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Extensions indicates that a higher standard of design with traditional materials and incorporating features that are complementary to the existing building will be required within an ASLC.
8. The two rear dormers would be set back within the roof slope, being of the same dimensions, evenly placed and incorporating pitched roof forms. Consequently they would be in accordance with the advice of paragraph 7.7 of the HDAS with respect to the positioning of dormers. However, when considered in the context of the first floor rear window and the roof-slope of the rear projection I find that they would not relate comfortably to the form of the existing building.
9. Because of their size, scale, width and position, the proposed dormer windows would fail to respect the proportions and size of the existing window at first floor level. The proposed dormers would fail to harmonise with the architectural form of the existing property resulting in an awkward relationship with the existing window to the detriment of the building's architectural integrity.
10. The appellant has suggested that as the rear roof-slope does not have a high degree of public visibility the proposed dormers would appear subservient in the streetscene recognising that paragraph 7.3 of the HDAS indicates that the degree of public visibility will influence the assessment of visual impact. Whilst accepting that the rear roof-slope is not highly visible and therefore the proposal would not be dominant within the streetscene I nevertheless consider that the impact on the host property would be harmful as it would not address the HDAS advice that rear roof extensions should relate well to the proportions, roof forms and massing of the existing property and its neighbours.
11. The appellant has highlighted the existence of both pitched roof dormer windows and flat roof dormers within the immediate vicinity including within the ASLC. However, I do not know the circumstances of these cases and in any event I have determined the appeal on the basis of the evidence before me including the characteristics of the appeal property.
12. I have had regard to the fact that the explanatory text to emerging Part 2 Policy DMHB5 recognises that ASLC are non-designated heritage assets with the policy stating that within an ASLC extensions to dwellings should respect the architectural style of the original building. Although I have not been made aware of the status of this emerging policy I consider that its principles are not significantly different from the relevant Local Plan policy.
13. By virtue of their width, size and scale the proposed rear dormers would fail to preserve the character and identity of the host building and would not enhance

its overall appearance contrary to Policy BE5 of the Local Plan. Taking account of the location of the property within the ASLC the proposals would also be contrary to Local Plan Policies BE13 which require the appearance of development to harmonise with features of the area, Policy BE15 which requires alterations and extensions to existing buildings to harmonise with the form and proportions of the original building and Policy BE19 which requires new development to complement or improve the character of the area. The proposal would also be contrary to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of securing good design.

14. The Council has raised no objection to the principle of the front roof lights. I consider that their position and size would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the host property or the streetscene. Were I to allow the appeal a condition governing the materials to be used could ensure that the appearance was in keeping with the existing property and in accordance with paragraph 7.5 of the HDAS which requires front roof lights to be conservation type and flush with the roof line.

Other Matters

15. Concerns were raised by a neighbouring resident about the effect of the proposal on their living conditions in respect of privacy and sunlight and the effect of the proposal on car parking locally. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons the decision does not turn on these matters.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Kevin Gleeson

INSPECTOR