

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2017

by J Dowling BA(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/16/3162514

5 Neela Close, Ickenham UB10 8NZ

- 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 Dr and Mrs S Sahshikanth against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 43861/APP/2016/3222, dated 24 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the general streetscene and the Ickenham Village Conservation Area; and
 - whether the proposal would result in the loss of a protected tree which if lost would affect the character and appearance of the general streetscene and Ickenham Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. From visiting the site Ickenham Village Conservation Area appears to be an example of early 20th century suburban architecture. Houses are built of brick and render with pitched tiled roofs and include design features such as gable ends and dormers. These features contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole and its significance as a designated heritage asset.
 4. The appeal property forms part of a small modern in-fill development that is set behind Nos 1 and 3 Milton Road as a result views into the close and of No 5 from Milton Road are limited. I observed at my site visit that all of the other properties within Neela Close are considerably larger than No 5 and a number would appear to have been extended.
 5. No 5 is a two storey detached house with single storey attached garage located on the east side of the close. The proposal is for a two storey side extension that would incorporate the existing single storey garage. Whilst the Council acknowledge that the proposal complies with the guidance provided in the Hillingdon Design and Access Statement, Supplementary Planning Document
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Residential Extensions (2008) (the SPD) their main concern is that given the location of the property the proposed crown roof would be particularly prominent and as a consequence would be out of character in a streetscene characterised by hipped roofs.

6. Whilst I acknowledge that the design of the roof would differ from that on adjoining properties, in my opinion, given the width of Neela Close and the proximity of No 4 the roof and extension when viewed from the close would appear as a subordinate addition with the hipped roof consistent with the pitch and scale of the main roof and the design and appearance of the roofslopes on adjoining properties. As a result I consider that the proposal would reflect and respect the character and appearance of the host building and would not be out of character within the streetscene and as a consequence would preserve the character and appearance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area.
7. Therefore I conclude that the proposal would accord with the aims and objectives of policies BE1 and HE1 of A vision for 2026 Local Plan: Part One – Strategic Policies (2012)(the Local Plan) and policies BE4, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1998) Saved Policies (2007)(the Saved UDP) which together aim to ensure that new development proposals are of a high quality design which harmonise with the character and appearance of existing buildings and the streets scene and which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. The purpose of these policies is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks, amongst other things to secure good quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of buildings and to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
9. There is a large mature Oak tree located near the rear boundary of the appeal site. This tree is protected by virtue of a Tree Preservation Order and I consider that it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the general streetscene and the Ickenham Village Conservation Area.
10. No information has been submitted with either the application or the appeal to demonstrate that the tree could be satisfactorily protected. The Council and the appellant have both suggested that such information could be submitted by way of a condition. However, without this information I consider that given the limited depth of the plot, the size and maturity of the tree and its proximity to the proposed extension the tree I consider that it is not possible to satisfactorily assess whether the tree could be retained. If the proposal did result in the loss of the tree I consider that this would be detrimental to the appearance of general streetscene and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area.
11. Therefore, I consider that this information is fundamental to being able to determine whether the proposal is acceptable and is not a matter that can be dealt with by means of condition. As a consequence, given the legislative responsibility to ensure that development within a Conservation Area does not cause harm to the designated heritage asset I have to take a precautionary approach and therefore I conclude that the proposal would be contrary to policy HE1 of the Local Plan which seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment and policy BE38 of the saved UDP which expects proposals to retain landscape features of merit.

12. A number of adjoining occupiers have raised concerns regarding loss of light and overlooking. However given the orientation, boundary screening and the separation distances between the properties I am satisfied that the living conditions of these occupants would be maintained.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, this appeal should be dismissed.

Jo Dowling

INSPECTOR