
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2017

by Geoff Underwood BA(Hons) PGDip(Urb Cons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 25 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/17/3169599

1 Crown Close, Hayes UB3 3BJ

- 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 H Farooqi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 29491/APP/2016/1809, dated 9 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first and second floor rear extension and the raising and enlargement of roof to create habitable roofspace and installation of new shop front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues raised by this appeal are the effect the development would have on the character and appearance of the host building and the area, and on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining residential property at 59 Station Road.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site occupies a corner plot on the inside of a right angled bend on Crown Close making it prominent in the streetscene. At the front it has the appearance of a two storey Victorian building with a projecting shopfront at ground floor level and it makes a positive contribution to the area's character and appearance as a result. Its south east side elevation, however, presents a largely blank three storey elevation to the street.
 4. The proposal would add an additional storey as well as extending the front elevation of the building forward above ground floor level. This would give the building a four storey appearance to the front and side, albeit that the third floor would be set back from the façade and clad in roofing material.
 5. The proposal would fundamentally change the appearance of the front of the building, losing the attractive architectural detail and features of the existing building, including the bay window and pitched roof. In their place the front elevation would appear bland and bulky, albeit retaining the narrow plot width and adding limited visual interest in the form of Juliette balconies at first and second floor. Its overall height and forward extension above ground floor level
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would be apparent from the busy commercial area of Station Road from where it would appear noticeably taller. This would result in an incongruous effect on the streetscene in the vicinity of the junction of Crown Close and Station Road in harmful contrast to the predominantly one and two storey commercial buildings in the vicinity.

6. The effect of the increase in height to the rear portion of the building would be less marked opposite the four storey flats and adjacent to the predominantly blank elevations which run along the south east and north west sides of Crown Close respectively. The addition of windows into the currently blank south east side elevation would add some visual interest to the side elevation of the rear part of the building. However, this would have a limited effect, especially when considered with the more awkward and bulky treatment of that part of the side elevation of the building nearest the corner.
7. The overall effect of the design, appearance, height and proportions of the extended building would be materially harmful to the building's and the area's character and appearance with which it would fail to harmonise. Any improvements the appellant considers might arise from a 'facelift' of the building would be significantly outweighed by these negative effects.
8. As such the proposal would be contrary to Local Plan¹ Policy BE1 and saved UDP² Policies BE13 and BE15. Together these require high quality design which is appropriate to its context and that development which fails to harmonise with the existing street and the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building is resisted. These policies accord with the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) requirement³ that permission should be refused for poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character of an area.

Living conditions

9. The north west side elevation of the existing building is situated close to the rear of buildings on Station Road including the first floor of No 59 which the Council advise comprises residential accommodation. That property has first floor windows facing the side of the appeal site and their close proximity means the two buildings have a sensitive relationship as a result.
10. The existing arrangement would have the effect of compromising the living conditions of the occupiers of No 59 to a degree due to the higher side elevation of the appeal building which its rear windows face and the presence of windows serving habitable rooms in the appeal site looking onto the rear of No 59.
11. Nevertheless, the additional storey of development extending over a greater proportion of the side elevation so close to the rear of No 59 would materially reduce the levels of natural light reaching the inside of that property. The outlook from those rear windows (including those which are obscure glazed when open) would be particularly oppressive as a result of the dominant and overbearing form of the side elevation. Furthermore the addition of a window serving a bedroom within the additional storey to the appeal property would

¹ A Vision for 2026 Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies, 2012.

² London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan, 1998.

³ Paragraph 64.

harmfully increase the loss of privacy experienced by occupiers of No 59 as a result of overlooking from an elevated position.

12. Consequently the living conditions of the occupiers of No 59 would be materially harmed, contrary to saved UDP Policies BE19, BE20 and BE21. Together these policies seek to ensure that residential amenity is complemented, that adequate daylight can penetrate into and between buildings and that extensions which would result in a significant loss of residential amenity due to their siting, bulk and proximity are resisted, an approach supported by Council guidance⁴. The proposal would also fail to accord with the Framework's core planning principle⁵ of always seeking to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing occupants of land and buildings.
13. The proposal would lead to the improvement of the existing residential accommodation within the appeal building, particularly the upper flat, through the creation of more generous internal space, improved light and outlook from the additional windows and the addition of outdoor space on the top floor. However, these benefits to occupiers of the appeal property in particular, and the housing stock more generally, would be at the expense of neighbours' living conditions and would not outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

14. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of host building and the area, as well as harming the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining residential properties, contrary to the development plan, Council guidance and the Framework. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Geoff Underwood

INSPECTOR

⁴ Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document – Residential Extensions, 2008.

⁵ Paragraph 17.