
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 May 2017

by L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 13th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/17/3171280

Shanti Bhavan, 73 Briarwood Drive, Northwood, HA6 1PL

- 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 Pritesh Vaid against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 53737/APP/2016/4091, dated 8 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as "Part two storey, part single storey side extension and raising of roof and installation of 2 front and 2 rear roof lights".
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Preliminary Matter

1. The description of development was changed on the appeal form and the Council's decision notice from that detailed on the original application. In the interests of clarity I have used the revised description as it best matches the proposal before me.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. No. 73 Briarwood Drive, the appeal property, is a two storey detached dwelling situated on a prominent corner plot. The building is L-shaped with a hipped roof and a front gable. The wider area is characterised by residential properties, with some variety in style and appearance, set-back behind front garden areas. Properties on corner plots are sited away from the boundaries and, whilst some have single-storey projections which extend to the road, gaps at first-storey level are present which allow views through. These elements create a sense of openness in the area.
 5. Like others, No. 73 is set-in significantly from the side boundary which creates an important visual gap and gives the site an open and spacious feel. The side building line has already been breached to the rear by an existing extension, however, the extension is set back behind the main dwelling and is single-storey thus maintaining the important visual break. I understand that
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permission was also previously granted, as part of the same application, for a single-storey side extension. Due to its location the property is readily visible from the street.

6. The proposal is to raise the roof height and introduce a part single, part two-storey extension which would wrap around the side and front of the building. Roof lights would also be installed.
7. The proposed extension would be extremely close to the side boundary of the property; though I acknowledge there would be a slightly larger set-back of around 1.5 metres at first-floor level. This encroachment into the important visual gap would cause significant harm to the open character of the area and would have a detrimental impact on the sense of spaciousness.
8. The side of No. 73 already breaches the established building line along the western arm of Briarwood Drive, however, the proposed extension would exacerbate this and further emphasise the scale and bulk of the extended property. The dwelling would, consequently, create an uncharacteristically more cramped character and appearance.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would consequently fail to accord with the aims of policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One – Strategic Policies and policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan saved policies (September 2007). Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that development improves and maintains the quality of the built environment and provides a high quality of design which harmonises with, and makes a positive contribution to the local area.
10. Whilst the proposal may meet the guidelines set out in the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions, 2008 (SPD) in some respects, it would not in others. The SPD states that where there is not an existing side extension within 1 metre of the boundary a minimum set-back of 1 metre from the side boundary is required in order to protect the character and appearance of the street scene and the gaps between properties. The SPD also goes on to say that any extension to dwellings on corner plots should ensure that the openness of the area is maintained and the return building line is not exceeded.
11. I acknowledge the architectural variety in the area and note the appellant's efforts to create an acceptable scheme and the frustration around the other examples cited. I am not fully aware of the full specific details of the other examples; however, the evidence before me does suggest that the circumstances in those instances were different. For instance, the property at 113 Potter Street is not within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site and No. 41 Briarwood Drive is a different house type which does not occupy a sensitive corner plot.
12. The permission granted at No. 40 is more similar but it does not appear to have been implemented. However, if it was it would, in combination with the appeal scheme, erode the spaciousness of this corner location even more. The scheme at No. 40 does not therefore persuade me to find the current proposal acceptable. In any event, each case must be treated on its own merits and the existence of other examples does not justify perpetuating the harm I have identified.

13. Having regard to my conclusions on the main issue and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L J O'Brien

APPOINTED PERSON