
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2017

by C J Ford BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 31 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/17/3175437

37 Woodlands Avenue, Ruislip, London HA4 9RL

- 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 Ms Gabriella Dipasquale against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 46045/APP/2017/338, dated 30 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'conversion of garage, demolition of existing conservatory with proposed single storey side/rear extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of the proposed development in the header above is taken from the original application form. The Council more appropriately describes the proposal as 'single storey side/rear/front extension and conversion of garage to habitable use'.

Main Issue

3. The Council's reason for refusal solely relates to the proposed front extension. The main issue is therefore the effect of the proposed front extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located in a formally laid out residential area and comprises a two storey semi-detached house. The same building line as the appeal property and the attached neighbour is adopted by the pair of properties to the south west, Nos 33 and 35 Woodlands Avenue. A key part of the original character and appearance of the house and the neighbouring dwellings is the prominence and vertical emphasis of the two storey bays in the front elevations.
5. The house has an existing single storey garage attached to the side which is set back from the bay and broadly aligns with the front wall. The proposed scheme includes a 1m front extension to the garage that would continue across the front door to form a porch. The wrap around development would have a taller crown roof form compared to the existing flat roof of the garage. The 1m

- extension would project beyond the depth of the existing bay window and given the building line, it would similarly project beyond the bays of the neighbouring houses.
6. The guidance on porches at paragraph 8.2 of the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document 2008 (SPD) is relevant. The proposal would comply with the specification that, 'In the case of being combined with a garage conversion they may be integrated with a forward extension of the garage not exceeding 1m'. However, it would not comply with the specification that, 'The depth of any porch must not extend past the line of any bay window'.
 7. Two further specifications are judgment based. The first that, 'Any porch should not diminish the scale, design, character or appearance of any bay window'. The second being, 'Porches should be subordinate in scale and form and should not be detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene'.
 8. The submitted proposed side elevations indicate the extension would project beyond the bay by around 0.3m. Therefore, as the bay is approximately 0.7m deep, proportionally it would not stand 'marginally' forward of the bay as described by the Council and emphasised by the appellant.
 9. Moreover, it is a combination of the front extension's depth, height and width which must be considered. Taken as a whole, the additional bulk would result in the extension becoming the overriding dominant feature in the front elevation, rather than sitting comfortably alongside the bay. It would fail to appear as a subordinate addition and would lead to a horizontal emphasis rather than a vertical one. Consequently, the proposal would be detrimental to the original character and appearance of the house and this part of the street scene. Its harmful impact would not be mitigated by the proposed rendered finish.
 10. It is acknowledged the attached neighbouring house, No 39 Woodlands Avenue, has a similar existing front extension. However, the extension appears incongruous amongst the four properties that share the same building line. Therefore, instead of re-introducing a pleasing degree of symmetry to the pair of semi-detached houses, the proposal would magnify the harm to the original character and appearance of the wider group of properties.
 11. The appellant has drawn attention to other similar developments in the nearby area. However, the full background to these cases has not been made clear and they are not so widespread that they have become the prevailing character. The examples at Nos 50 and 52 Windermere Avenue in particular, which form part of a different street scene, serve to illustrate the resulting overriding dominance referred to above. In any event, each case must be considered on its own merits.
 12. It is understood the appellant would like the proposed gym in the converted garage to be accessed via the porch so as to minimise works to the existing hallway which has recently been renovated with new flooring. However, this benefit would not outweigh the identified harm of the extension.
 13. In light of the above, it is concluded that the proposed front extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. It would therefore conflict with Policy BE1 of

the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies 2007. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that extensions harmonise with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building. They also seek to ensure that development within residential areas complements or improves the character of the area.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C J Ford

APPOINTED PERSON