
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2018

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Wednesday 14th March 2018.

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/17/3180523
3 Stirling Close, Uxbridge UB8 2BA

- 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 Kareem Kareem against the decision of London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 70781/APP/2016/1702, dated 15 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is for one new house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - i) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area; and,
 - ii) whether the proposed parking arrangements would compromise highway safety.

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi-detached dwelling with a detached garage to the side located within a short cul-de-sac (Stirling Close). The appeal property and other dwellings are distinctly arranged in pairs around the head of the cul-de-sac. This layout arrangement gives Stirling Close a degree of symmetry.
4. In terms of design and appearance the properties within Stirling Close are of two different house types, which benefit from similar materials and fenestration detailing. The pair on either side of the head of the cul-de-sac (including the appeal property) are finished in brickwork with limited render and designed with hipped roofs. The two pairs at the top of the cul-de-sac incorporate gabled roofs with largely rendered front elevations.
5. A number of the dwellings within the cul-de-sac benefit from modest single storey side extensions. No 4 Stirling Close includes a two storey side extension, which is set back from the original dwelling at ground and first floor with a flat roof and therefore is subordinate to the host property. Overall, the design, form, scale and layout of the original dwellings define the distinct character and appearance of the wider cul-de-sac.

6. The proposed development includes the demolition of the existing detached garage and the erection of a two storey single bedroom dwelling to the side of the appeal property.
7. The proposed new dwelling has been designed as a two storey side extension to the appeal property with a 1m set-back from the front of it at first floor level. However, this does not comply with the Council's Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document - Residential Extensions (Residential Extensions SPD) which provides design guidance for different types of extensions to dwellings. This requires two storey side extensions to be set-back 1m at ground and first floor from the main front building line to ensure a subordinate appearance to the existing house.
8. I am aware that under the provisions of permitted development a single storey side extension can be flush with the principal elevation of a host property. However, in this particular case the proposal relates to a two storey dwelling. Therefore I attach limited weight to this argument.
9. Despite the appellant's intentions to design the proposed dwelling as a two storey side extension, the new dwelling, which incorporates a front entrance, tiled roof feature over the ground floor and a lower height and narrower width relative to adjoining dwellings would appear conspicuous. Therefore, it would fail to harmonise with or reflect the architectural composition of nearby dwellings. For the above reasons and despite its juxtaposition to the dwelling south of the appeal property, the new dwelling would also appear cramped and contrived.
10. The appeal property benefits from Lawful Development Certificates (LDC's) for extensions under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO). These include a hip to gable roof extension, which if implemented, would change the appearance of the pair of semi-detached dwellings.
11. However, the introduction of a new dwelling adjoining the appeal property would in terms of scale and design significantly unbalance and erode the symmetry of the pair of semi-detached dwellings, which the appeal property forms part of. Moreover, the proposal would result in the creation of a terrace of three dwellings, which would starkly contrast with the pairs of semi-detached dwellings within the cul-de-sac.
12. The proposed development would also result in the creation of a hard surfaced area along the front of the appeal site to accommodate the proposed parking and bin storage. The Residential Extensions SPD recommends that 25% of frontages are soft landscaped. The proposed scheme provides no soft landscaping.
13. However, the majority of frontages within the cul-de-sac are hard surfaced with minimal or no soft landscaping. The appellant has offered to provide landscaping by condition, which could be secured if the appeal were to succeed. Although this is unlikely to achieve 25% soft landscaping, on balance, a meaningful scheme could be achieved. Therefore, for the above reasons and given that the 25% requirement is guidance, I do not find conflict with the Residential Extensions SPD, in respect of frontage landscaping. I also find no conflict with Policy BE38 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Unitary

Development Plan Saved Policies (November 2012) (Local Plan: Part Two), which seeks to provide new landscaping where it is appropriate.

14. The Council has also referred to Policy BE22 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two, this requires that buildings of two or more storeys should be set back a minimum of 1 metre from the side boundary to prevent a terraced appearance. In this particular case given the juxtaposition of the appeal property in relation to the dwelling to the south the lack of a 1m set back from the side boundary would not result in terracing. Therefore, I find no conflict with this Policy BE22.
15. For the reasons given above the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012), which amongst other things aims to achieve a high quality in all new buildings, alterations and extensions which enhance local distinctiveness.
16. The proposed development would also fail to accord with the design aims of policies BE13, BE15 and BE19, of the Local Plan: Part Two, which require new development to harmonise with the scale, form and architectural composition of existing buildings and the wider street scene to complement or improve the character of the area.
17. The appellant has made reference to other two storey side extensions which I have limited information in respect of. In any event, each proposal is considered on its individual merits. Therefore, I have determined this appeal on the merits of the proposal.

Parking and highway safety

18. In accordance with the Council's parking standards the appeal property as extended would require two parking spaces and a single space for the new dwelling. The proposal provides a single parking space for each dwelling, which would result in the shortfall of a parking space.
19. The proposal would therefore increase demand for on-street parking in an area which has a low PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) score, suggesting a higher reliance on cars. The availability of on-street parking is also limited due to parking restrictions along the cul-de-sac and nearby roads. This situation would lead to an increased probability of vehicles parking near to and within the cul-de-sac to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and highway safety. I therefore find conflict with Policy AM14 of the Local Plan: Part Two, which only supports schemes which accord with the Council's adopted parking standards.
20. I acknowledge that the proposal would result in the creation of an additional dwelling. However, this limited benefit given the scale of the proposal would not outweigh the harm I have already identified.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons set out above, I dismiss this appeal.

M Aqbal INSPECTOR