
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: 23 March 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/17/3180338

8 Bawtree Road, Uxbridge UB8 1PU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Lee against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 18278/APP/2017/1876 is dated 20 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Deepening of existing basement and extension of basement area to front and rear of property. Ground floor rear extension comprising flat roof. Additional skylight in main roof for first floor rear bedroom'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The proposed first floor plan on the appellant's drawing SKMPD-PA-8BR-003, Edition C, indicates a window to the rear bedroom. However, no such window is shown on the proposed rear elevation on drawing SKMPD-PA-8BR-001, Edition D. As the existing elevation contains a window in a similar position, I have proceeded on the basis that if the appeal were to succeed, such a window could be secured by a condition.

Main Issues

3. Although there is no formal decision from the Council it has considered the proposals and indicated that had it been in a position to determine the application it would have refused permission. The Council is concerned over the size and appearance of the proposed rear extension in relation to the appeal property and the quality of accommodation for future occupiers in respect of the size and outlook from a first floor bedroom at the appeal property. Accordingly the main issues are:
 - i) the effect of the proposed rear extension on the character and appearance of the host property; and,
 - ii) whether the first floor bedroom would provide adequate living conditions for the future occupiers in respect of the internal living space, and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property 8 Bawtree Road (No 8) comprises one half of a pair of similar semi-detached properties. Together with another pair of similarly proportioned but subtly different semi-detached dwellings it forms a pleasing terrace of four dwellings. In particular the front elevations of these dwellings are largely original which incorporate architectural detailing and are particularly attractive.
5. The rear elevations to this terrace are planer but benefit from similar two storey outriggers with more individual alterations and extensions at ground floor level.
6. Most notably the dwellings in this terrace have a similar height difference between the eaves height of the two storey outriggers and single storey rear outriggers and extensions, providing a degree of uniformity.
7. No 8 to the rear also has a part two storey and part single storey outrigger with a cat-slide roof over the two storey element and pitched roof on the single storey part, paired with a similar outrigger at the adjoining dwelling 10 Bawtree Road. Attached to the outrigger at No 8 is a single storey lean to extension, which is largely timber framed and open at the front with a profiled sheet roof. This rear elevation of the outrigger incorporates a door and small window at ground floor and similar sized window at first floor level.
8. To accommodate the proposed basement extension and to match the floor levels within the main dwelling the existing internal ground and first floor levels within the two-storey part of the outrigger would be raised.
9. Consequently, the proposed rear flat roof extension, which would replace the existing single-storey part of the outrigger and associated timber lean-to would be taller in height to accommodate the change in levels. Therefore, the proposed extension in terms of scale and height would be somewhere between a single storey and two storey extension, which would effectively dominate the existing outrigger and appear conspicuous.
10. Moreover, due to the limited and uncharacteristic gap between the top of the new extension and the eaves of the outrigger the proposed extension would appear disproportionately tall in scale. As a consequence, and despite largely being screened from the highway it would fail to harmonise with the host property.
11. I note the Council's concerns over the alignment of the proposed windows and openings. However, the French doors would be centrally placed along the rear elevation of the new extension and would broadly align with the rear facing window to the dining room. The doors and window serving the basement would have a slightly asymmetrical design but these would only be partly visible above ground so as not to result in any significant harm to the overall appearance of the rear elevation.
12. For the above reasons, due to its scale and height the proposed rear extension would fail to harmonise with the proportions of the existing building and as such would harm its appearance. Therefore, I find conflict with Saved Policy BE15 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two Saved UDP Policies (November

2012), which requires proposals to successfully harmonise with the scale and proportions of the original building.

Living Conditions

13. As previously stated the internal floor levels within part of the outrigger would be altered. Consequently, the first floor bedroom to the rear of the appeal property due to the sloping roof of the outrigger would have a very limited floor to ceiling height for a large part of this room.
14. The Council has referred me to the technical housing standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) and those in the London Plan (2016), which set out various size requirements for internal living space. However, these primarily relate to new dwellings whereas the proposal before me is for extensions and alterations to an existing dwelling. Therefore, these standards do not carry any significant weight against the proposal.
15. Irrespective of the above standards the first floor bedroom due to a reduction in floor space as a consequence of internal alterations to the layout combined with a low ceiling height for a large part of the room would result in a poorly designed living space, which would be cramped thereby resulting in harm to the living conditions of future occupiers.
16. I note the Council's concerns in respect of outlook from the rear bedroom. However, as previously stated I am satisfied that a window along the rear elevation could be secured by a planning condition, which would provide a satisfactory outlook if the appeal were to succeed.
17. However, due to the poor design of the rear first floor bedroom the proposed development would be contrary to the aims of Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012), which amongst other matters requires high quality design in all new extensions and alterations and Policy 7.6 of the London Plan (2016), which requires the provision of high quality indoor space.

Other Matters

18. I note the appellant's desire to extend the property, in particular to meet the needs of his family including younger and elder generations. I also appreciate that the changes in floor levels would reduce the number of stair cases which no doubt would improve accessibility around the dwelling. I also acknowledge that the proposed alterations and extensions would improve the thermal efficiency of the dwelling thereby reducing carbon emissions. However these reasons behind the proposal do not persuade me to find the scheme acceptable having regard to the harm identified above.
19. According to the appellant the proposed scheme addresses issues identified in respect of a previous planning application¹ at the appeal site and a subsequent dismissed appeal² in respect of that application. Although, I have limited information in respect of the previous scheme I note from the Council's Committee Report that some of the concerns raised by the previous Inspector have been resolved. Despite this, for the reasons set out above I find harm arising from the proposals subject of this appeal.

¹ 18278/APP/2015/4309 – Enlargement of basement to create habitable space and ground floor rear extension.

² Appeal Decision APP/R5510/W/16/3150519

20. The appellant has expressed concerns over the Council's processing of applications relating to the appeal site. However, such matters do not affect the planning merits of the case and are separate from the appeal process.

Conclusion

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

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR