
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2019

by **L McKay MA MRTPI**

Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3229325

61 Collins Drive, Ruislip HA4 9EL

- 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 L Cotter and Mr J Connolly against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 19025/APP/2019/162, dated 15 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension, single storey side extension and addition of a first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The description of development in the heading above is taken from the application form although I have omitted reference to elements which are not acts of development.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - a) the character and appearance of the area; and
 - b) the living conditions of the occupiers of 59 Collins Drive, in respect of outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is in a residential area characterised by pairs of mainly two storey semi-detached properties. There are a small number of detached dwellings, including the appeal site and the house next to it. As a detached bungalow on a narrow plot, the host property is something of an anomaly in the surrounding area. It is a small, low building however, so does not currently stand out in the street scene.
5. The proposed extensions would result in a two-storey dwelling of similar height to the adjacent properties but with a significantly narrower first floor. The slim proportions would be emphasised by the steeper roof pitch and the offset of the first floor from the boundary. Whilst I recognise the need to prevent a

'terracing effect', the resulting dwelling would contrast with the much wider neighbouring properties. The side extension would bring the front door forward and it would be set directly underneath the point where the dwelling would change from single to two storey height. This would result in a contrived and awkward relationship which would further emphasise the narrowness of the first floor.

6. I appreciate that adding a first floor to a bungalow would perhaps inevitably add bulk and increase the scale of the building in a way that is not subservient to the host property. However, the scale and form of the proposed first floor and side extensions would result in a poorly designed and proportioned dwelling which would be out of keeping with its surroundings. It would not respond positively to its context or harmonise with the surrounding area. Although it would not project forward of the existing dwelling or the building line of neighbouring properties, the form and proportions of the extended dwelling would make it a prominent and incongruous feature in the street scene.
7. Bay windows are a feature of dwellings in this area. Two storey properties have two storey bay windows in line one above the other, while bungalows have single bay windows with subservient roofs over. Roofs over bay windows are wider than the bay, with deep overhanging eaves which create a shadow line and add articulation and interest to the front elevations. While there are variations in the shape and style of the bays, their alignment and roof form are a common design element which create a pleasing rhythm in the street scene.
8. The appeal proposal would retain the bay window but with a smaller pitched roof. The overhanging eaves detail would be lost and the bay would be out of alignment with the large first floor window above. This would create a discordant feature in a street scene and the characteristic elements of the bay window would be significantly and harmfully eroded. As such, the proposal would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition of the original building and features of the area.
9. Both the Council and the appellant refer to the existing bungalow being rendered, however I observed on my site visit that it appeared to be of painted brick. While there are some rendered properties further up Collins Road, this part of the street is dominated by red brick. In this context, rendering the whole building would add further harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. Due to the form, scale and design of the extensions, the resultant dwelling would be a prominent and incongruous feature in the street scene of Collins Road and when viewed from the adjacent footpath. Consequently, I conclude that when the proposal is considered as a whole it would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition and proportions of the existing building and the street scene and would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. Conflict would therefore arise with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies 2012 (LP1) which seeks to achieve high quality design; Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies 2012 (LP2) and chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which collectively seek to ensure new development complements or improves the character of the area

and harmonises with the street scene, scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the original building.

11. I have had regard to the guidance in the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document 2008 (HDAS). However, it does not address the situation whereby a new storey would be added to a dwelling, so is of limited relevance in respect of that element of the appeal development. While the proposed rear extension would comply with the guidance in the HDAS, the appeal proposal considered as a whole would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area for the reasons identified above.

Living conditions

12. The proposed first floor extension would extend over the footprint of the existing bungalow and would project past the rear of No 59, but by a relatively limited amount. It would be set off the boundary and the pitched roofs of both the proposed side and first floor extensions would slope away from the neighbouring dwelling, reducing its apparent bulk when viewed by the occupiers of this adjacent property. The proposed flat roofed rear extension would be wider and extend further to the rear than the current conservatory but would be largely screened by the existing boundary treatment and as such would have a limited impact on the outlook from the neighbouring property. As a result, while the rear section of the extensions would be seen from the rear of No 59 and its garden, due to their form and position they would not appear dominant or intrusive features from those areas.
13. No 59 has 3 windows in the side elevation at first floor which appear to serve a landing and bathroom, all of which are obscure glazed. The outlook from these windows is therefore already restricted. The bathroom has a larger window in the rear elevation. Consequently, while the proposed first floor extension would result in some further reduction in the outlook from these windows it would not be so great as to significantly adversely affect the living conditions of the occupiers.
14. The proposed first floor extension would not extend beyond a 45 degree line taken from either of the first floor windows in the rear of No 59. This part of the development would comply with the provisions of the HDAS which seek to prevent overshadowing of neighbouring properties, and would not significantly adversely affect the living conditions of the occupiers.
15. There is a ground floor opening in the side of No 59 which appears to serve a kitchen. The height of the proposed first floor extension would result in some loss of daylight to this side, however there is a larger window on the rear elevation which would not be affected. Therefore I do not consider that the proposal would lead to a significant reduction in light to this room.
16. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposed extensions would not have a significant adverse effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of 59 Collins Avenue with regard to outlook and light. I therefore find no conflict with the provisions of Policies BE19, BE20 and BE21 of the LP2 or the HDAS, all of which seek to safeguard the amenity of the area and residents.

Other matters

17. The appeal scheme would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation and garden space for future residents and would not impact on parking or

highway safety. It would also not adversely impact the living conditions of 63 Collins Drive. However, these matters are of neutral consequence in the overall planning balance.

18. The existing conservatory is in poor condition and its removal would result in a very minor benefit but this would be limited given the degree of screening of the rear garden. It would not outweigh the harm identified in character and appearance terms.
19. The appellant refers to the provisions of the Framework which support infill development and development on previously developed land. Whilst that is the case, the Framework also requires new development to be of good design. In this regard, the proposal would conflict with the Framework when considered as a whole and this is a matter of overriding concern.

Conclusion

20. I have found that the proposed extensions would harm the character and appearance of the area. While I have found that there would be no significant adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of 59 Collins Drive in respect of outlook and light, this does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in character and appearance terms. Therefore, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR