



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2019

by R Morgan MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3231634

3 Linksway, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 2XA

- 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 & Mrs Bhandari against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 13796/APP/2018/4508, dated 23 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two storey front/side extension, single storey side extension and single storey rear extension, involving demolition of existing conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the two storey front/side extension. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the single storey side and rear extensions and planning permission is granted for a single storey side and single storey rear extension, involving demolition of existing conservatory, at 3 Linksway, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2XA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 13796/APP/2018/4508, dated 23 December 2018, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3787/1, 3787/2A, 3787/3C, 3787/4D, 3787/5A and 3787/6C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the single storey rear and single storey side extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the description of development from the Council's decision notice which more clearly and simply describes the proposed development than the longer description given on the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Copsewood Estate Area of Special Local Character (ALSC).

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located within the Copsewood Estate, which is a leafy residential area characterised by large, two-storey detached houses set well back from the street with strong, bold facades. Their large gardens with hedges and mature trees play a significant role in defining the character of the area which is designated as an ALSC. The arboreal character of the estate is an important feature of the ASLC and the appeal site is covered by an area Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
5. 3 Linksway is a large detached brick and tile house set within a substantial plot. The house is L-shaped and has a prominent front gable with arched windows on the ground floor. The proposed development would involve the infilling of the space at the front with a two-storey extension which would add a second, slightly smaller, front gable with oriel window to match that in the existing gable. Whilst the existing house is not symmetrical, the proposed extension would remove its L-shaped form and with it the clear, strong building line, replacing it with a small step in an otherwise continuous frontage. Due to the size and limited set back of the proposed extension, it would not appear subservient, rather it would create a new, awkward asymmetry which would appear overly dominant, detracting from, rather than enhancing, the appearance of the house.
6. Although the large garage door is a feature of the existing house, by bringing it forward it would add further to the prominent appearance of the proposed extension.
7. Despite the mature trees and hedges in the front garden and the set back from the road, the house is readily visible from the street. The house and its garden setting contribute positively to the area. The proposed front/side extension would cause harm to both the house itself and to the character of the wider ASLC.
8. Policy 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that permission should be refused for development of poor design, taking into account any local design standards, style guides or supplementary planning guidance. Saved UDP Policies BE15 sets out design expectations for new development and Policy BE5 relates to new development within an ALSC. Although the proposed two storey front extension has been designed to reflect the existing house and the materials would match, it would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition and form of the house. The proposed two-storey front extension therefore does not comply with the design expectations in Saved Policies BE5 and BE15.
9. The Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) SPD provides more detailed guidance on extensions and alterations. Design guidance cannot cover all cases and, due to the design and form of the existing house, the proposed front two storey extension is not a common type of development. Although it contains general principles which are relevant, such as the importance of respecting building lines and set back distances, the HDAS has limited guidance which is relevant to the proposed front extension.
10. I conclude for the reasons given that the proposed two storey front/side extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the Copsewood Estate ASLC. The Proposal is contrary to Policies BE1 and HE1 of

the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies 2012 which require new developments to achieve a high quality design and enhance local distinctiveness and the Areas of Special Local Character; Policies BE5, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon UDP Saved Policies 2007 which require new development, including that within ASLCs, to harmonise with existing buildings and the street scene, and to complement or improve the character of the area.

11. I acknowledge that other properties in the street have been extended and, in some cases, replaced with substantially larger properties, however all are materially different to the appeal proposal. The appellant has identified positive benefits of the scheme, including increased living space for the existing occupiers and local employment during construction. These factors do not outweigh the harm which I have identified.
12. The single storey side extension would largely replace existing buildings at the side of the house which abut the boundary. The side extension would continue the building line of the front elevation of the house with matching materials and windows. The proposed rear single storey extension, which would be a replacement for the existing conservatory with a modest additional increase in floorspace, would have an acceptable impact on the existing house and neighbouring occupiers.
13. The proposed side and rear single storey extensions would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the ASLC and would comply with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies 2012 and, Policies BE5, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon UDP Saved Policies 2007 and the Supplementary Planning document HDAS: Residential Extensions.

Conditions

14. As well as the standard timescale for commencement of development, I have specified the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to materials is also necessary to ensure that the appearance of the extensions would be satisfactory.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should be allowed insofar as it relates to the single storey side and rear extensions involving demolition of the existing conservatory, but dismissed insofar as it relates to the two storey front/side extension.

Rosie Morgan

INSPECTOR