



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2019 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Andrew Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/19/3229462

5 High Road, Ickenham UB10 8LE

- 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 Sterling Rose Developments Ltd against the decision of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 18563/APP/2018/1090, dated 22 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 29 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension to provide a 1 x 1 bed self-contained flat, provision for refuse and cycle storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located to the side of a two-storey building on the western side of the High Road. The existing building comprises two semi-detached properties (nos. 3 & 5 High Road) with ground floor retail units facing the street. The building features decorative mock Tudor timbering and traditional timber sash windows, central recessed entrances, divided by brick pilasters and corbels. There is a substantial gap between 5 High Road and the neighbouring building to the north at 7 High Road. An access drive within this gap serves a number of properties to the rear of the site.
 5. The site lies within the Ickenham Village Conservation Area which covers a section of the High Road, and its significance lies, in part, in the distinctive and attractive appearance of the buildings within it. Indeed, the existing building contributes positively to the street scene and the appearance of the conservation area through its detailing, symmetry and materials. However, I do note that there is a mix of architectural styles in the vicinity as directly adjacent, at no. 7, there is a modern three-storey flat roofed office building.
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The part of the conservation area immediately around the site is also characterised by its spaciousness and the gaps between the various buildings.

6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this respect national policy on heritage assets, which includes conservation areas, is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At paragraph 192, it sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage asset and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
7. The proposal would result in the formation of a two-storey side extension which would provide a self-contained flat within the first floor. A gap in the building at street level would allow for vehicles and pedestrians to pass through in order to access the properties to the rear.
8. Although the proposed gable style roof would match the existing building, and the extension would be slightly set down from the existing ridge, would be narrower than the existing building, and the proposed fenestration would align with the existing windows, I find that the scale and design of the proposed extension would be visually obtrusive and would damage the appearance of the building. It would infill the existing gap between Nos 5 & 7, drastically altering the rhythm of the row of buildings facing the street and thus eliminating a main element defining the character of the conservation area. The appellant highlights that a small 1m gap will be retained, but the proposed floorplans indicate the main entrance and stairs to the new flat would be located within this gap. I therefore do not think there will be a gap between the proposed extension and the neighbouring building at no. 7 that would be noticeable in the street scene.
9. Furthermore, by virtue of its size and appearance, the proposed extension would alter the shape and distinctive symmetry of the existing building. I find that the ground floor tunnel-like gap would appear awkward and incoherent with the building. It is considered that the proposal would therefore result in an incongruous addition to the property that would fail to harmonise with the existing building. I find that the proposed development would disrupt the architectural character of the conservation area and reduce the spaciousness in the immediate area.
10. The harm to the significance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area as a designated asset would be less than substantial, but I agree with the Council that the provision of one dwelling would not outweigh this harm.
11. I conclude the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area. It would therefore be in conflict with policies BE1, BE13, BE15, BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan (2012) (the 'local plan') and the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement for Residential Layouts Supplementary Planning Document which together seek to ensure proposals are well designed and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area in which they lie. It would also be in conflict with policies HE1 and BE4 of the local plan, Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), and guidance in the NPPF which together seek to ensure heritage assets are preserved and enhanced.

Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR