



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2019

by Christopher Miell MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/19/3234182

58 Avenue Crescent, Hounslow TW5 9RE

- 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 Mrs H Kaur against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00060/58/P4, dated 14 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 May 2019.
 - The development is described as 'Erection of Single Storey and Part Two Storey Rear Extension (Part Retrospective)'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a part single storey and part two storey rear extension and a single storey boiler room at 58 Avenue Crescent, Hounslow TW5 9RE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 00060/58/P4, dated 14 March 2019, subject to the schedule of conditions attached to this decision.

Procedural Matters

2. The original planning application was determined on a retrospective basis by the Council. At my site visit, it appeared that the works had been completed at the appeal property. However, it was apparent that two of the first-floor windows that have been installed do not accord with the proposed drawings submitted with the appeal. Specifically, a first-floor window has been installed on the side elevation, which serves the staircase, but it is not shown on the proposed drawings. In addition, the first-floor window on the rear elevation, appears to be smaller than shown on the proposed drawings. As such, I am determining this appeal on a part-retrospective basis.
3. In the interests of precision, I have amended the description of development within my formal decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cranford Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. 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 the Cranford Village Conservation Area (the 'CA').

6. The CA consists of the historic Cranford Village with the High Street forming the main axis, and open space and a watercourse to the west. The special architectural and historic interest of the CA lies in the quality of the early eighteenth-century buildings, which form the heart of the village. The lush open space of Avenue Park provides an appearance of open farmland. Later twentieth century buildings are carefully laid out around squares and in linked groups with ample open space around them. Most of the streets off The Avenue, including Avenue Crescent, contain well maintained detached and semi-detached properties from the 1930's.
7. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, which appears to date from the 1930's. The building has a red brick exterior under a hipped roof form with a double bay window on the front elevation and an attractive brick chimney. The surrounding area has a suburban residential character and the properties along Crescent Avenue have a homogenous appearance, which adds positively to the character and appearance of the CA.
8. The development consists of a part two storey and part single storey 'L-shaped' extension, which extends to the rear and side of the existing building. Immediately to the rear of the single storey rear extension, there is a single storey boiler room which has a mono-pitch roof and is accessed externally. The extensions have been constructed from materials to match the host building and provide additional living accommodation for the occupiers of the dwelling.
9. It has been brought to my attention that planning permission¹ was granted by the Council for the erection of a part single and part two storey rear extension on 21 September 2016. The approved plans show a two-storey side/rear extension with a depth of 3.6 metres (the current development has a depth of 3.7 metres) and a width of 3.12 metres (the current development has a depth of 3.25 metres). However, the approved scheme does not include a boiler room, which forms part of the current development.
10. Whilst the previous planning permission has now lapsed, the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (September 2015) (the 'LP') remains the adopted development plan. As such, I have had regard to the Council's previous decision in the overall planning balance.
11. The Council contend that the first-floor rear extension appears disproportionate to the width of the existing house, when compared to the approved scheme. In addition, concern is sited about the resultant asymmetrical eave overhang to the rear of the property and the appropriateness of the boiler room.
12. Despite being materially larger than the approved scheme, the degree to which the additional width and depth alter the overall appearance of the extension is very limited and there is no discernible impact when the works are viewed from the street. When considered on its planning merits, the rear extension is of an appropriate scale with a design and external appearance which are in-keeping with the host dwelling and local vernacular. In terms of the boiler room, it is a small-scale structure which does not compete with the architectural integrity of the host building or the extension.

¹ Council Ref: 00060/58/P1

13. In terms of the eaves overhang, whilst I acknowledge that a symmetrical finish has not been achieved at the rear of the property, I am mindful that the development has been constructed to work with the constraints of the existing building and to avoid the eaves intersecting with the first floor bay window. In addition, when comparing the width of the eaves overhang on the eastern flank to that on the western flank, where the extension meets the first floor bay window, the difference in width is very slight. Therefore, the asymmetrical eaves detailing at the rear of the property is not readily apparent in the context of the overall extension.
14. Overall, the development retains a subservient relationship with the host building and safeguards the architectural interest of the dwelling. In addition, the works maintain the homogenous appearance of the properties on Crescent Avenue, which safeguards the character and appearance of the area.
15. I acknowledge that the depth of the proposal exceeds 3.65 metres, which conflicts with the advice on rear extensions to semi-detached properties, as contained within the Council's Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document: A Guide for Householders (December 2017) (the 'SPD'). However, I note that the preface to the SPD states that *'the Council will consider each application on its own merits against its policies and these Guidelines and this may mean that a proposal that follows the letter of the Guidelines may not always be acceptable or that one that does not may sometimes be acceptable due to the circumstances of the site'*. In this instance, I have assessed the proposal on its own merits and found it to be acceptable.
16. In conclusion, the development is sympathetic to the characteristics of the original building and surrounding properties on Avenue Crescent. As such, the development would have a neutral impact upon and thus preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole. Consequently, the proposal would accord with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the LP, which, amongst other things, collectively require new development, including residential extensions, to complement the original building through high quality design, respond meaningfully and sensitively to the site context and to conserve and where appropriate enhance the Borough's heritage assets.
17. Whilst I have found some technical conflict with the SPD, in this case the approval of planning permission is justified in so far as that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.

Other Matters

18. Interested third parties have expressed concern that the appeal property is currently being used as a house in multiple occupation. However, I have been provided with no substantive evidence to this regard. In any event, this is a separate matter, which falls outside of the scope of this appeal.

Conditions

19. As the appeal has been determined on a part-retrospective basis, it is necessary to grant planning permission subject to the standard three-year time limit condition. It is necessary that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, it is necessary to impose a materials condition.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Christopher Miell
INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing number: 58AVECRES/RPA/1 Rev: 0
Drawing number: 58AVECRES/RPA/2 Rev: 0
Drawing number: 58AVECRES/RPA/3 Rev: 0
Drawing number: 58AVECRES/RPA/4 Rev: 0
Drawing number: 58AVECRES/RPA/5 Rev: 0
- 3) The external materials to be used in the construction of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.