



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2019

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/19/3231363 16 and 18 Roy Road, Northwood HA6 1EH

- 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 D Slattery against the decision of The Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 72549/APP/2018/3701, dated 18 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as joint application with Mr Winfield and Ms Price – 18 Roy Road, Northwood, Middx. HA6 1EH. Alterations to main roof to create loft conversions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. My attention has been drawn to the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies with modifications (March 2019) (the emerging Plan). The emerging Plan is at an advanced stage and has been subject to examination hearings. However, as I do not have evidence before me as to whether there have been any significant outstanding objections and the Inspector's report has not yet been published, having regard to the advice provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework)¹, I give this emerging Plan limited weight as a material consideration.
3. The appeal relates to both 16 and 18 Roy Road as the original planning application was submitted as a joint application, therefore the address within the banner title has been amended to reflect both properties.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a pair of semi-detached two-storey houses located on the south side of Roy Road in a residential area close to the centre of Northwood. The houses along the road vary in design, size and style and the area is recognised by the Council as part of the Old Northwood Area of Special Local

¹ Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Character because of its distinctiveness of tree lined roads and the relatively unaltered nature of its fine examples of Victorian architecture.

6. The appeal properties and the semi-detached dwellings adjacent, 12 and 14 Roy Road, are the same house type, and the two pairs of semi-detached houses are the only houses of this type within the road. As a result of their design characteristics, which includes projecting peaked gable roof profile with timber detailing, large fenestration detail and recessed entrances, the houses make a positive and striking contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
7. The proposal would increase the ridge height of the dwellings with new second floor windows and a new roof form over both dwellings in order to provide additional habitable loft space. A box dormer is also proposed to each roof plane to the rear elevation.
8. The existing roof form with consistent eaves height and chimney stacks and peaked projecting gable ends to the front facades, contributes to the distinctive character of the dwellings. The eaves height would remain the same as existing in parts, however there would be an additional raised ridge line and together with the change in roof form, this would create an inconsistent eaves height, distorting this regular and existing pattern.
9. Taking into consideration the uniform relationship of the adjacent identical semi's at No's. 12 and 14, the houses currently stand out in the road as a group of four identical houses in a street scene of much variety of house type, design and scale. The appeal dwellings would lose their own identity as a result of the proposal, and although the proposed development would result in symmetry to the two appeal houses, they would no longer read as a group of four identical houses.
10. Furthermore, the appeal dwellings are taller than the houses to the east side of the road and together with their design characteristics and as a group of four, they stand out in the street scene. The unsympathetic design of the proposal would not harmonise with the host dwellings, and would cause the appeal pair of semi's to appear prominent and dominant within the street scene. This would therefore be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwellings, their relationship as a group of four, and the character and appearance of the area including the Area of Special Local Character.
11. The rear elevations of the properties also retain a significant amount of character, although both have been extended by virtue of modest single storey extensions. The existing long returns with a gable end feature are an integral part of the original fabric of these houses. The change in roof profile would appear as a discordant addition to the original dwellings and would also not harmonise with the symmetry of the other rear returns that are a feature of this part of Roy Road.
12. Other rear box dormers are visible to the rear roof slope of dwellings close to the appeal site. However, their planning history is not before me and in any case, I have assessed the proposal on its own planning merits.
13. Whilst the design of the proposed box dormers may follow the guidelines within the Council's Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document 2008 (SPD) Residential Extensions to be centrally located

- within the roof slope, to sit below the ridge height and above the eaves level, nonetheless, the combination of an increased building height, the design of the roof, together with box dormers, introduces new features to the dwellings that would be incongruous to the host dwellings, and would not appear subordinate.
14. The rear elevations of houses along Roy Road are seen from the small cul-de-sac of Barker Close, and therefore the visual impact of the development is not restricted to houses along Roy Road but to outside the site. The development would result in significantly harming the character and appearance of the dwellings, and the wider area.
 15. I have taken into account 'saved' Policy BE5 of the Hillington Local Plan: Part Two – Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (November 2012) (UDP) for new development in Areas of Special Local Character to harmonise with design features, architectural style and building heights, and to respect the symmetry of original buildings. For the reasons above, the proposal would be at odds with this policy.
 16. Bringing all matters together, whilst the proposal may accord in part with the SPD, it would not accord with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One Strategic Policies (November 2012) for development to be designed to be appropriate to its identity and context, make a positive contribution to the local area, and harmonise with and conserve and enhance Areas of Special Local Character, amongst other matters. Furthermore, it would conflict with the design aims of the 'saved' UDP Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19. In addition, the proposal would not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of new development that achieves high quality design that is sympathetic to local character and history.

Other Matters

17. It is acknowledged that the area is one of mixed character and alterations may have occurred to other dwellings and grounds. Nonetheless, the area retains a significant amount of character.
18. Although there is evidence of similar extensions to 59 and 61 Chester Road, and the appellant would agree to both houses building the proposed development at the same time, the planning history of Chester Road is not before me, nor am I aware that these houses are located within the area of Special Character. Nevertheless, I have assessed the proposed development on its own planning merits.
19. Whilst the dwellings are located close to Northwood and access to public transport options, the addition of a 4th bedroom to each house would not significantly contribute to the viability of the centre to outweigh the harm I have identified. Also, despite the fact that no objections have been received to the proposal, this does not alter my findings.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR