
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2019

by S J Lee BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3239532

36 Long Lane, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8TA

- 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 A Rufai against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 61043/APP/2019/2101, dated 20 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is double storey rear extension and part double storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Issues

2. The appellant submitted revised plans with the appeal which include the retention of the existing chimneys. This is a relatively minor alteration and I am satisfied that the interests of no party would be prejudiced by my consideration of the amended plans. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the Ickenham Village Conservation Area (IVCA).

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a detached dwelling in a predominantly residential area. The site lies within the IVCA. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

6. The appeal site sits in a short row of dwellings between Almond Avenue and Milton Court. Other than No 30 and No 34, it appears that all of the dwellings were of the same original design. Although there have been alterations, the row still manages to largely maintain a consistent and complementary character. The host dwelling has a symmetrical frontage to the road, with evenly placed windows sitting above and to the side of a central main entrance. A flat roofed side extension accommodates a garage. Similar extensions are prevalent on most of the other similarly designed dwellings.
7. Although the development would maintain the existing roof profile, the two-storey side extension would result in an asymmetrical and somewhat lop-sided appearance to the main elevation. This would detract from the original character of the house and the prevailing character of the street. The harm caused would be exacerbated by the position of the garage and the poor visual relationship between the single and two storey elements. The garage would be partially integral to the main two storey elevation and partially within the single-storey side extension. This would appear awkward and disjointed and not represent an appropriate standard of design. It would also fail to reflect the existing character of the dwelling, where the garage is clearly a subordinate and complementary feature.
8. The imbalance in the frontage would be further highlighted by the position of the chimney on the side nearest to No 34. The plans show this to be retained in its current position. However, it would no longer have any relationship to the side wall and would thus appear in an odd location part way down the revised roof slope. Overall, the alterations to the front elevation would not be sympathetic to the original character of the dwelling or to the street scene.
9. To the rear, the development would have a depth of around 4 metres. This is consistent with the guidance in the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document (HDAS). Furthermore, when considered in the context of the rear building lines of No 34 and No 38, this would not be excessive. The development would result in two hipped roof projections with a flat roofed section in the middle. While this would create a somewhat unusual roof profile and appearance, my attention has been drawn to a similar arrangement at No 38. As a result, I do not consider this to be unacceptable in principle. This roof profile also provides a degree of articulation which helps to break up the increased mass of the elevation.
10. Nevertheless, the side extension would again result in a degree of imbalance to the appearance of the frontage, leading to an irregular spacing of windows at the first floor. As with the garage door, the ground floor window to the utility room would sit partially within the single storey side extension and partially within the two-storey element. While not to the degree of the front elevation, this would still have a detrimental impact on the character of the dwelling.
11. The harm associated with this would be mitigated to an extent by the lack of visibility from publicly accessible areas. Nevertheless, when considered as a whole, the scale and design of the development would still result in unacceptable harm to the character of the host dwelling and the wider area.
12. The Council raised concerns over the reduction in the gap between No 34 and No 36. Views of trees to the rear are already only available at first floor level. The development would reduce the gap, but views of trees would still be

achievable. As such, I do not consider this aspect of the development to be harmful.

13. Overall, I find that the development would be harmful to the character of the host dwelling and the street scene. Consequently, it would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the IVCA. Accordingly, there would be conflict with policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan – Strategic Policies (2012), policies BE4, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Saved UDP Policies (2012), Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (2016) and the HDAS. These seek, amongst other things, to ensure development respects the character of the locality and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of heritage assets.
14. The Council have also referred to the emerging Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Development Management Policies with modifications. This plan is at a late stage in the preparation process and therefore carries substantial weight. The development would be contrary to policies DMHB1, DMHB4 and DMHD1 which seek, amongst other things, to ensure alterations to buildings do not have an unacceptable impact on the character of host dwellings or the surrounding area.
15. I would characterise the harm to the significance of the IVCA as 'less than substantial'. In such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the harm to be weighed against any public benefits. I address this below.

Other Matters and Planning Balance

16. The development would provide some personal benefits to the appellant insofar as it would create additional living space. However, this does not weigh in favour of the proposal in relation to its impact on heritage assets. Any economic benefits associated with carrying out the development would be temporary in nature. As such, there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm to the heritage asset identified above.
17. In coming to my conclusion on character and appearance, I have had regard to the alterations that have been made to other buildings in the row. In particular, I have noted the alterations to No 42. As with the development, this has created an imbalance in the frontage. However, the design of No 42 is significantly different to that proposed here and the impacts on the character of the dwelling and street are not comparable. Alterations to No 38 are also different and have not had the same effect on the area that would be caused by the development. These examples do not alter my conclusions.
18. The Council have not found harm in relation to any other aspect of the development and there have been no objections from interested parties. However, these factors do not outweigh my concerns.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Lee

INSPECTOR