
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 January 2020

by Edwin Maund BA (Hons) MSc Dip UP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3242884

31 Stanley Road, Northwood, Hillingdon HA6 1RG

- 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 Gaurav Sharma against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 26417/APP/2019/2945, dated 30 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a 4m single storey rear extension, conversion of the roof space into a habitable use to include a front dormer and three side roof lights, involving raising of the ridge height and conversion of the rear roof from hip to gable end with a Juliet balcony window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council have referred to policies from the emerging Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two –Development Management Policies with Modifications (2019). This is subject to an Inspector's report following examination I have therefore given these policies substantial weight in my consideration of the merits of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Hillside Northwood Hills Area of Special Local Character.

Reasons

4. No 31 Stanley Road is a modest detached bungalow on the north western side of Stanley Road. It sits in a line of bungalows with similar design characteristics, being hipped roofed with regular gaps between properties forming a clear street pattern.
5. On this side of the road the properties are elevated above the level of the adjacent highway accessed by steep driveways and set behind sloping front gardens. The land levels also fall on this part of the street east to west with the levels of the properties generally following this land profile.
6. This pattern of development is part of the distinctive character of this residential area and contributes to the positive sense of place which the area

enjoys, and which has been recognised by the designation of the Special Local Character Area.

7. Under Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) Policy HE1, areas designated as Areas of Special Local Character are to be regarded as non designated heritage assets. Consequently, I am required by the Framework to assess the effect on the significance of this non designated heritage asset and undertake a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
8. Whilst there is no specific policy objection to the principle of a residential extension, I note that the appeal scheme would extend the building considerably. The combination of the two-storey rear extension with straight gable and the increased ridge height to accommodate the rooms in the roof space would markedly change the character of the host building, thereby diminishing the contribution it currently makes to the street.
9. The combination of the rear extension and the significant scale of the roof addition would partly erode the extent of undeveloped space between this property and the neighbours either side, harming one of the positive characteristics of the street.
10. From my observations on my site visit I would agree with the appellant that the view of the rear of the property from the adjacent public open space is restricted, by the boundary fence, the significant change in levels and ground cover. I do not find therefore, that the appearance of the rear of the property would be harmful when viewed from the open space.
11. Despite this, the use of sympathetic materials and the building being set back from the road, the increased roof height and bulk would be dominant and prominent particularly when viewed from along the street where the roof form would be more visible. Whilst reasonably localised in its extent the effect of this would be to diminish unacceptably the character and appearance of the host property with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the local area.
12. The appeal scheme would thereby be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One which seeks to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment. The scheme would also conflict with the objectives of Policies BE5, BE13, BE15, and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two which aim to protect the character of this area by requiring extensions to harmonise with the scale, form and proportions of the existing property such that the character of the local area is protected.
13. As the emerging policies carry on the thrust of the adopted policies, I also find there is conflict with DMHB 5, DMHB 11, and DMHD 1.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has referred to an application for a Lawful Development Certificate submitted to the Council, seeking confirmation as to what could be constructed as permitted development. I do not know if the Council have yet determined this application and it cannot therefore be regarded as a fallback position. Therefore, I can afford it little weight in considering the proposal before me.

15. Reference has also been made to other extensions carried out in the vicinity. Whilst I was able to view the extensions at No 22 and No 44 Stanley Road, I do not have the full details of these schemes before me and in any event am required to consider each case on its own merits. These extensions are not of the same form or in the same location and their existence in the locality does not overcome the harm I have identified.
16. The appellant considers the extension would enable the property to be better equipped for family life, a private benefit to which I can attribute little weight. This therefore does not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusions

17. I therefore conclude that the proposed extensions would harm the character and appearance of the Northwood Hills Area of Special Local Character and the appeal should be dismissed.

Edwin Maund

INSPECTOR