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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020

**by B Davies MSc FGS CGeol**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 27 March 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3237650**

**7 Hillside Crescent, Northwood, HA6 1RP**

- 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 Hitesh Nagrani against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
  - The application Ref 21862/APP/2019/2137, dated 20 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 August 2019.
  - The development proposed is 'Flat roof to sloping tiled roof extension over the existing ground floor rear extension, raising of the ridge by 400mm to reduce the crown roof area, revisions to the existing and proposed velux windows, new rear dormer, garage conversion and internal alterations'.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. Planning permission is granted for a flat roof to sloping tiled roof extension over the existing ground floor rear extension, raising of the ridge by 400mm to reduce the crown roof area, revisions to the existing and proposed velux windows, new rear dormer, garage conversion and internal alterations at 7 Hillside Crescent, Northwood, HA6 1RP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 21862/APP/2019/2137, dated 20 June 2019, subject to the following conditions:
  1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
  2. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
  3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the application form and drawing numbers 0219-PLA-01\_A, 0219-PLA-02\_A, 0219-PLA-03\_A, 0219-PLA-04\_A, 0219-PLA-05\_A, 0219-PLA-06\_A, 0219-PLA-07\_A, 0219-PLA-150\_A, 0219-PLA-151\_A, 0219-PLA-152\_A, 0219-PLA-153\_A, 0219-PLA-154\_A, 0219-PLA-155\_A, 0219-PLA-156\_A, 0219-PLA-157\_A, 0219-PLA-158\_A.

### Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Hitesh Nagrani against the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

## **Preliminary Matters**

3. A new Local Plan Document<sup>1</sup> was adopted between the date of the application and the appeal decision. This replaces the Local Plan Part 2 Saved UDP Policies (2012). Both parties have had the opportunity to comment on any relevant implications for the appeal.

## **Main Issues**

4. The effect of the proposal on:
  - The character and appearance of the host building and local area;
  - The living conditions of the neighbours at No 5 Hillside Crescent, with particular regard to outlook, privacy and overshadowing.

## **Reasons**

### *Character and Appearance*

5. The house is on long and hilly street of similar detached bungalows. These are characterised by steep hipped roofs, a large front bay window fronting a cross hipped extension, angled porches and an attached, flat roofed garage. However, most of the properties exhibit extensions and roof alterations, including change of shape, orientation, and insertion of skylights and dormer windows. The host house has been subject to an earlier loft extension, incorporating a large crown roof, front and rear dormer windows and side rooflights. A flat roofed, single-storey side and rear extension has also previously been added, protruding beyond the rear building lines of both next-door properties and featuring a large roof lantern. Rear gardens in the area are large and surrounded by fencing, mature trees and hedging, which significantly obscure visibility between properties, even during the site visit in the winter. The host house is nearly on the brow of a hill, making it prominent on the street scape. The surrounding area is also hilly, which leads to an attractive pattern of mixed roof heights.
6. The site is in a designated Area of Special Local Character, which has been identified as having a valued character and identity that should be preserved and enhanced. Policy DMHB 5 states that alterations in these areas should respect the established scale, building lines, height and design of the area, and that extensions should be subservient and respect the original architectural style.
7. Although the proposed roof would be slightly higher, in reducing the size of the crown, the structure would be more consistent with the prevailing architectural style of the area when viewed from the public domain. I have made some allowance for the fact the roof would remain slightly lower than next door (No 9) and the stepped roof line would therefore be maintained, in keeping with local character. There are other examples of similarly large roof extensions in the wider locality and the overall effect of the proposals on the appearance of the area is therefore not significantly intrusive or out of character. Therefore, it would not be in conflict with Policy DMHB5.
8. Policies DMHD1 and DMHB5 require that roof extensions remain subservient and state that raising a main roof above the existing ridgeline will generally not

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<sup>1</sup> London Borough of Hillingdon, Local Plan Part 2, Development Management Policies, Adopted January 2020

be supported. In this case, it is proposed to raise the roof by 0.4 m, on top of an already substantial roof extension, which as it exists cannot be described as subservient. However, by reshaping the roof, the crown section, which is not in keeping with the original house, will be reduced. I conclude that raising the main roof by a small amount would not harmfully increase domination of the host house or street scene when compared to the current situation and reducing the size of the crown would slightly improve the appearance by better reflecting the original shape. For these reasons, the particular circumstances of this case justify an increase in the height of the main roof line.

9. It is proposed to build a slightly higher garage roof with a sloping edge. I have noted the Council's observation that the proposal 'bears little resemblance to any existing features', but in having a sloped roof with flat area behind, it would reflect the design of the main roof. During the site visit I observed that many garages along the street have been converted, with several versions of pitched roofs. The alterations to the garage are minor when viewed from the public domain, and the change from a completely flat roof above the garage is an improvement to appearance, when considered in context with the multi-level sloping roofs characteristic of the area and host house. On this aspect, I therefore do not find conflict with Policies DMHD1 or DMHB5.
10. It is also proposed to convert the rear extension roof from flat with a lantern, to predominantly hipped, removing the existing first floor gable end. A sloping roof would significantly improve the appearance of the host house because it is in keeping with the original character. I have noted that Policies DMHD 1, DMHB 5 and the HDAS SPD<sup>2</sup> require that extensions should appear subordinate and that these proposals would result in an even larger extension. However, the change in roof shape would not add to the building's footprint, and although bulkier, would be more in keeping with the building's character, so when considered in the round I do not consider it to be harmful. On this aspect, I do not find conflict with Policies DMHD1 or DMHB5.
11. I conclude that the proposed development would no harm the character and appearance of the host building and local area. I therefore find no conflict with Policies DMHD1 and DMHB5, the relevant requirements of which are set out above.

### *Living Conditions*

12. When viewed from the rear garden space of No 5, additional bulk would be observed because of the conversion of the single-storey extension roof from flat to sloping. I have noted the test in paragraphs 5.20, 6.22 and 7.21 of the HDAS SPD brought to my attention by the neighbour, which recommends that a two-storey extension intercepting a line at 45° from a neighbouring habitable window may not be acceptable in relation to outlook. Based on diagrams provided by the neighbour, the corner of the existing extension already intercepts this angle, and by adding height the proposals would exacerbate this. However, the structure would only marginally intercept the 45° line and, given that gardens are well screened by fencing and mature vegetation and the separation distance between the properties would be maintained, I do not consider the slight additional loss of outlook to be harmful or the proposals over dominant or visually intrusive. I note similar concerns are raised by the neighbours at No 9, but as their rear extension projects further than No 5, the

<sup>2</sup> Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement: Supplementary Planning Document (2006)

addition of a sloping roof would be even less intrusive than at No 5 when viewed from the rear amenity space, and again I do not consider this change to be harmful.

13. There would be no significant increase in overlooking of neighbouring rear garden space from the change to rear window location. At the site visit I observed that it is currently not possible to see into either neighbouring private garden space from the first-floor rear window because of the oblique angle and an effective screen of mature vegetation, even in the winter. The proposals move the first floor, rear window further backwards, reducing the opportunity to view the neighbour's rear gardens further. There would be no harm to the privacy of neighbouring gardens.
14. No evidence is before me to substantiate claims of overshadowing or loss of light from the Council and given that the host property would be to the approximate north west of No 5, I am satisfied that any effect would be limited and not harmful to the living conditions of the occupants.
15. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of the neighbours at No 5 Hillside Crescent, with particular regard to outlook, privacy and overshadowing. I therefore find no conflict with Policy DMHD1, which requires that a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings is achieved, or policy DMHB11, which requires that development should be to the highest standards.

### **Conditions**

16. In addition to the standard time limit, I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans in the interests of certainty. A materials condition is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

### **Conclusions**

17. For the reasons above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*B Davies*

INSPECTOR