
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 March 2020

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3245992

3 Bagley Close, West Drayton UB7 7PZ

- 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 Albana Vajvoda against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 26860/APP/2019/3538, dated 28 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension and conversion of roof space to habitable use to include 3 side dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Procedural Matters

2. Since the determination of the application the Council has adopted the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies and Site Allocations and Designations (January 2020) (HLPP2). The Council and the appellant have advised that the Policies of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies 2012 and the Residential Extensions Hillingdon Design & Access Statement Supplementary Planning Document 2008 have now been withdrawn and replaced by the HLPP2 Policies. I have therefore considered the development against the relevant policies of the HLPP2.
3. I have used the Council's description of the development in reaching my decision as it more fully describes the details of the development than that given on the original planning application form. The appellant's appeal form also makes reference to the updated description.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on
 - (i) the character and appearance of the host property and the area including the West Drayton Green Conservation Area; and
 - (ii) the living conditions of the future occupiers with particular regard to outlook, light and standard of accommodation.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property comprises of a single storey detached dwelling located on a residential cul-de-sac, typically characterised by single storey properties of varied styles and designs set back from the road behind a front garden/driveway. It is situated within the West Drayton Green Conservation Area (CA) and immediately adjacent to the Grade II* listed St Martin's Church and the associated Grade II* listed boundary wall to the west of the appeal site that contribute to the open and mature well-established residential character and appearance of the area.
6. The proposal would involve the construction of a single storey rear extension and the conversion of the loft space to create additional accommodation. The loft conversion would involve the construction of 2no. flat roof dormers and a Velux rooflight on the southern side roof slope and 1no. flat roof dormer on the northern side roof slope. The dormers would be located centrally within the roof planes, stepped down below the ridge level and set up above the eaves.
7. Although the proposed dormers would be set back and stepped down, the proposed roof additions would result in substantial bulk being added to the roof plane. The proposed roof extensions, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would create an unbalanced and awkward appearance that would detract from the architectural integrity of the host property.
8. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Bagley Close. As such, I consider that the proposed dormers would result in incongruous and out-of-keeping additions that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.
9. I have considered the appellant's statement that the design and layout of the proposed dormers has been carefully considered in order to take into account the character of the host property and the other roof extensions in the area. Whilst the use of matching materials and fenestrations would assist in integrating the proposed dormers with the host property, these aspects again do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above. As such, I consider that the development would adversely harm rather than positively contribute to the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
10. Given the location of the appeal site within the CA, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. I consider that the proposed dormers, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would have a negative material impact and would fail to preserve or enhance the CA.
11. Given the modest scale of the development, the harm would be less than substantial but in accordance with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits to the proposal. I note the appellant's desire is to provide additional living accommodation within the host property and secure its optimum viable use. However, I find insufficient public benefit arising from this proposal to offset the identified harm to which I attach significant weight.

12. Consequently, I conclude that the development would adversely harm the character and appearance of the host building and the area, including the CA. It would conflict with the overall design and conservation aims of Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies 2012 (HLPP1), Policies DMHB1, DMHB4, DMHB11 and DMHD1 of the HLPP2 and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan 2016 (LP). These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals for extensions or alterations of buildings will be of a high standard of design in relation to property to be extended and the character of the surrounding area; and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation areas.

Living conditions of the future occupiers

13. The submitted plans show that proposed loft conversion would create a reasonable sized area for the two bedrooms and a bathroom in the roof of the property. Bedroom no. 2 would be served by an obscured glazed window with high level openings only on the side elevation.
14. Whilst such design elements would reduce the impact of the proposal on the adjacent properties and would allow reasonable light penetration, I consider these features would severely restrict the outlook for the future occupants of bedroom no. 2 and result in a poor quality living environment for the future occupiers in this particular case.
15. I note the appellant's willingness to carry out further work and accept a planning condition to install a window in the front gable of the property in a similar form to No. 4 Bagley Close in order to safeguard the amenities of the future occupiers. This, however, would result in material changes to the proposal before me and in any event, I am required to consider the proposal on the basis of the same details that were before the Council when it made its decision.
16. Taking all matters into account, I consider that the development would result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of the future occupiers, with particular regard to outlook and standard of accommodation. It would conflict with Policies DMHB11 and DMHD1 of the HLPP2 and Policies 3.5 and 5.3 of the LP. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that all development proposals including extensions and alterations provide the highest standards of sustainable design and construction internally and externally to maximise sustainability and the amenity enjoyed by the occupants.

Other Matters

17. Given the location of the appeal site adjacent to the Grade II* listed St Martin's Church and the associated Grade II* listed boundary wall around the church, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the setting of the listed building and wall. Although it would be set back from the adjacent listed building and the boundary wall, I consider that the proposed roof dormers, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would introduce dominant features on the roof plane of the host property that would restrict the views of the listed church and wall from a number of public vantage points along Bagley Close and as such would have negative material impact on their setting. The setting would therefore not be preserved.

18. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellant. However, the roof dormers to the properties at No. 1 Bagley Close and Nos. 12 and 14 Church Road have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme and I am unaware of the full circumstances associated with these developments. In any event, each proposal falls to be assessed primarily on its own merits and as such accord them limited weight as precedents in this case.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR