



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 May 2020

by D. Szymanski, BSc (Hons) MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3246558

29 Frithwood Avenue, Northwood, HA6 3LY

- 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 Janet Wright against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref: 23979/APP/2019/2955 dated 30 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as application for planning permission for the conversion of the existing garage into kitchen/utility room space, including replacement of the front and rear garage doors with new building fabric, plus erection of a two-storey extension on the eastern side of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management Policies (the Part 2 Local Plan) was adopted by the Council on 16 January 2020. It replaces the 2012 saved Unitary Development Plan policies. As a result of the adoption of the Part 2 Local Plan document, the Council has withdrawn the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document. Consequently, I have had regard to the newly adopted policies in my decision and the parties have been provided with an opportunity to comment.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached dwelling occupying a corner plot on the junction of Frithwood Avenue and Canterbury Close. The area is characterised by dwellings of a mix of architectural styles on generous verdant plots, generally set away from their boundaries with the highway. Canterbury Close is a more recent back land development rear of No. 31 Frithwood Avenue served by a narrow carriageway and a footway on one side, adjacent to No. 31.
5. The eastern gable wall and boundary of the appeal property are prominently visible from Frithwood Avenue and Canterbury Close. The eastern property boundary comprises what appears to be a combination of shrubs, trees and an

- ivy covered wall or fence close to the kerbstone. It provides a prominent and continuous attractive verdant edge. The gap between the gable wall and the vegetated boundary provides relief between the dwelling and side boundary, creating a verdant and relatively open vista past the appeal site.
6. The proposed two storey side extension would appear to match the existing dwelling in height, depth and roof pitch. It would be subservient in size and scale to the main dwelling. However, it would be built to virtually the edge of the plot boundary. Based upon the information before me it would result in the loss of a significant part of the attractive verdant boundary, replacing it with a large flank wall. Even if some of the section of hedge could be retained the extension would be so close to the boundary it would significantly and detrimentally enclose this part of Canterbury Close. The proximity to the boundary and narrow kerb, means the extension would lack the relief provided by the current arrangement and would appear dominant and significantly overbearing in the street scene.
 7. Notwithstanding the overall plot ratio, the proximity to the boundary would result in the development appearing cramped within the plot. Furthermore, due to the narrow verge and proximity to the highway it would be prominently noticeable as a trapezoid extension. This type of built form does not appear to be part of the overriding character of the area, so the development would appear obtrusive in this regard.
 8. No. 31 is an original larger and higher dwelling that pre-dates Canterbury Close. It sits relatively close to the edge of its plot. Whilst the positioning does not contribute positively to the street scene, limited relief is provided to No 31 by a combination of a plinth and the footway. The proposal would retain a gap between the properties required by DMHD1. However, it would also result in harm to the character and appearance of the area for other reasons, and so conflict with Policy DMHD1. Therefore, the situation of and relationship with No. 31 does not justify the proposed development. I noted two other examples of dwellings close to or adjoining the highway boundary on Frithwood Avenue and Cullera Close. Each had a significant enclosing effect on the highway. Furthermore, based upon the evidence before me, such developments are infrequent in the area, and do not form part of its overriding character.
 9. In the event the appeal was allowed, the Council suggested planning conditions in respect of tree protection, retention and proposed landscaping. The proximity of the extension to the boundary and the narrowness of the verge, means that I am not satisfied that suitable landscaping could be provided that would be sufficient to mitigate the harm.
 10. For the reasons set out above, the development would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies (November 2012) (the Part 1 Local Plan) and Policies DMHD1 and DMHB11 of the Part 2 Local Plan. In combination and amongst other things these policies expect development to be designed to the highest standards, maintain the character, appearance or quality of the area and maintain openness on corner plots.

Other Matters

11. The development would provide benefits in terms of internal accommodation, be acceptable in respect of parking provision, garden space provision, protecting the amenity of neighbouring properties and flood risk. However, this does not mitigate or outweigh the harm I have found above.

Conclusion

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

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR