
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2020

by D Peppitt BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3246029

72 Long Lane, Hillingdon, Uxbridge UB10 0EQ

- 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 J Sidhu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 74771/APP/2019/3600, dated 4 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is part two storey, part single storey side/ rear extension and single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on:
 - The character and appearance of the site and surrounding area; and
 - The living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property, with particular reference to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located on Long Lane and contains a semi-detached 2 storey property and a separate garage. The road outside the property is separated from the main road by a grass verge and a footpath. The host property is set back from the road with a relatively large front garden and driveway. The surrounding area is predominately residential and is generally characterised by semi-detached dwellings, which are set back from the road with large front gardens and driveways. The proposed development would be a part two storey, part single storey side/rear extension and single storey front extension.
4. Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) requires that alterations and extensions of dwellings do not have an adverse cumulative impact on the character and appearance of the street scene, and that they should appear subordinate to the main dwelling. It also provides criteria for different types of extensions to demonstrate how this should be achieved.

5. For side extensions, it states, amongst other things, that they should not exceed half the width of the original property, be set back a minimum of 1 metre behind the main front elevation and be set in a minimum of 1 metre from the side boundary. For front extensions it states that alterations and extensions to the front of a house must be minor and not alter the overall appearance of the house or dominate the character of the street. It also states that porches should be subordinate in scale and individually designed to respect the character and features of the original building.
6. For rear extensions, Policy DMHD 1 states that pitched roofs on extensions should be of a similar pitch and materials to that of the original roof and subordinate to it in design. For roof extensions it states that they should be located on the rear elevation only, be subservient to the scale of the existing roof
7. The two storey side extension would largely fill the gap that currently exists between the neighbouring property No 74 Long Lane (No 74) and would abut the boundary with No 74. The height of the proposed roof would match the existing roof of the host property and it would include a front hipped roof to match the existing front window on the property. Therefore, when viewed from the front it would not appear subservient.
8. Part of the side extension would also include a front extension, which would contain a porch and garage extension. The front extension would protrude further forward than the existing front elevation of the host property. It would significantly alter the exiting design of the host property and in doing so would unbalance the other half of semi-detached property, No 70 Long Lane (No 70).
9. The proposal due to its size and bulk, when viewed from the front of the property would appear as a cramped form of development and would overly dominate the features of the host property. The design of the proposal would also not appear subservient to the host property. In addition, due to the close proximity of the neighbouring property it would create a terracing effect within the street scene. The proposed extensions would be contrary to the criteria set out in Policy DMHD 1, due to lack of 1m set in from the side boundary, lack of set down from the main roof, lack of a set back from the front, and it being of a width more than half the width of the original dwelling.
10. The single storey rear extension would extend from the rear elevation by approximately 9m at the furthest point, and would then step in towards the adjoining property at No 70. Due to the size and length of the single storey proposal, it would be a significant and bulky structure to the rear of the property. The two storey rear extension would protrude to a depth of approximately 3.5m at its furthest point, with a double pitched hipped roof above. The double pitched roof would create a valley roof design at the rear of the property.
11. The extensions to the rear would extend the property significantly and would create a massing of development to the rear. The design and excessive depth would be an overly dominant form of development, which would harm the architectural features and design of the host property and it would not appear subordinate. Furthermore, the roof form would not fit in well with the host property and would appear as an incongruous feature, in contrast to the nearby properties.

12. Taking the above points together, I consider that in this case, the combination of the design, depth, height and massing, along with the proximity of the extensions to the neighbouring property, would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.
13. I note that the appellant states that the side 2 storey extension is no larger than the neighbour's extensions, that neither of the adjacent properties have set backs, and that other properties nearby have been extended in a similar way which have been approved by the Council. However, I do not have full details of these approvals before me, therefore, I am unable to determine if they are directly comparable or what may have led to their approval. Whilst I note the neighbouring properties have no set back on their extensions, the bulk and design of this proposal would create a terracing effect in an area which is currently relatively open, and it would not appear subordinate. In any case, each proposal must be determined on its own merit.
14. Accordingly, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012), Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020). These policies, amongst other things, require new extensions to not have an adverse cumulative impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and appear subordinate to the main dwelling in their floor area, width, depth and height.

Living Conditions

15. The Council has suggested that the proposed single storey rear extension would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 74. It suggests that due to proximity to the boundary and excessive depth of the proposal that it would have an adverse impact on the outlook of the occupiers as it would be overly dominant.
16. However, the submitted drawings show that the single storey element of the proposal would sit partially below the existing ground levels of the garden, and it would sit below the fence height of the neighbouring properties. In addition, the proposal includes a green roof on top of the single storey extension. Therefore, the neighbouring occupiers when looking out at the first floor of their properties would see the grass roof, which is on the flat roof area of the proposal which would break up the views of the built form of the development.
17. I note that the Council also states that the single storey rear extension abutting No 70 would not be as deep compared to the area adjacent to No 74, and that it would not impact the occupiers of this neighbouring property. From the evidence before me and from my site visit, I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
18. The proposed development would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property, with particular reference to outlook. Therefore, the proposal would accord with policies DMHB11 and DMHD1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020). These policies, amongst other things, require there to be no unacceptable loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers

Conclusion

19. Whilst I have identified that the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property would be acceptable, I have identified that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

D Peppitt

INSPECTOR