
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2020

by Benjamin Clarke BA (Hons.) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Thursday, 08 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3244964

55 Wiltshire Lane, Northwood, Middlesex HA5 2LY

- 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 Stephen Horne against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref: 25646/APP/2019/3152, dated 8 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is dormer windows to rear facing roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council has confirmed that subsequent to its determination of the planning application, the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies and the Hillingdon Design and Access Statements: Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2008) have been superseded by the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020) (the Local Plan). As these draft policies were cited on the Council's decision notice, I consider that it would not cause prejudice to any party to proceed on this basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of a previously extended semi-detached dwelling. A notable feature of the appeal site, in conjunction with many other houses in the vicinity, is the presence of symmetry between pairs of semi-detached houses. Wiltshire Lane is located on a gradient. Next to the appeal site is an access to a garage court and an area of public open space is nearby.
5. Whilst the dwelling has previously been extended, this is a subordinate addition to the building. In consequence, it has allowed for the retention of symmetry between the appeal site, and the adjoining dwellings. In contrast the proposed rear dormer windows would have a height similar to the ridge height of the existing house. In consequence, the proposed development would erode the symmetry that exists between the appeal site and the adjoining house. This

- would result in the development being incongruous and therefore would not be a subordinate addition to the building.
6. This is a concern owing to the prominence of the appeal site. Due to the gradient of the locality and the presence of the access to the garage court, views of the side elevation of the dwelling and one of the dormer windows would be clearly visible from Wiltshire Lane. In result the proposal would appear discordant and strident.
 7. There is an area of public open space close to the appeal site's rear boundary. By reason of the position of the proposed site, in addition to the general topography of the area, the proposed dormer windows would be readily viewable, despite the appeal site not directly adjoining the open space. In result, the loss of symmetry between the appeal site and the adjoining house when viewed alongside other symmetrical pairs of semi-detached dwellings in Wiltshire Lane would be readily apparent.
 8. I have noted some landscaping within the open space, however, owing to the height and positioning of the proposed dormer windows, any screening effect offered by this landscaping would be limited and would not overcome my previous concerns.
 9. It has been suggested that by utilising permitted development rights, dormer windows could be installed on the rear roof slope of the original dwelling. Whilst this may be the case, a dormer constructed within the original dwelling's roof slope would have different proportions and form than the appeal scheme. In addition, the dormer would be less prominent owing to it being less visible from the area adjacent to the side of the appeal site.
 10. I am aware of some other dormer windows within the surrounding area. I do not have full information regarding their planning circumstances, which lessens the weight that I can attribute to them. However, I note that the existing dormer windows are generally constructed to different designs than the scheme before me and screened to a greater effect by other neighbouring buildings. In consequence, I do not find that the presence of other dormer windows requires me to disregard my previous concerns.
 11. I therefore find that the proposed development would have an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development, in this regard, would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012) and Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the Local Plan. These policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that developments achieve a high quality of design in all new extensions; that development should harmonise with the local context; and that there is no adverse cumulative impact of the proposal on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area.

Conclusion

12. For the preceding reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Benjamin Clarke

INSPECTOR