



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by Martin Chandler BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N1920/D/20/3256461

28 The Crosspath, Radlett WD7 8HN

- 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 & Mrs Taylor against the decision of Hertsmere Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0429/HSE, dated 20 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2020.
 - The development is proposed first floor side extension and façade changed from render/tile cladding to facing brick.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a proposed first floor side extension and façade changed from render/tile cladding to facing brick, at 28 The Crosspath, Radlett WD7 8HN, in accordance with application ref: 20/0429/HSE, dated 20 March 2020, and 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings: site location plan; 162.5-PLK-02 Revision E.
 - 3) The materials to be used on the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr & Mrs Taylor against Hertsmere Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - ii) whether the proposal makes suitable provision for car parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located within a road that exhibits a significant level of architectural variety. There are many different types of houses, and gaps between buildings are not consistent. Despite this variation, the architecture has a clear domestic scale and is of a pleasing form and appearance, with the prevalent facing materials being render and brickwork. Collectively, the dwellings combine to create a pleasing residential environment, however, there is no demonstrable uniformity or specific rhythm to be found within the street scene.
5. The appeal site is occupied by a detached dwelling that has previously been extended at two storey level to its left-hand side when viewed from the road. The majority of the front elevation of the dwelling is clad in tile-hanging and in this respect, it is a noticeable anomaly within the street scene. In addition, due to the topography of the site, the house itself is set at a lower level than the footpath to the front, with steps down to the front door. It is also set at a lower level than the neighbouring properties. This has the effect of ensuring that the eaves and ridge height of the existing building are demonstrably lower than the neighbouring buildings either side.
6. The proposal would introduce a two-storey extension to the other side of the dwelling, and as a consequence, the width of the overall building would fill the majority of the appeal site when viewed from the road. As with the existing extension, the proposal would be set back from the front of the building thereby providing some visual relief to its resultant mass. Despite this, the mass of the extension would require a crown roof, with a resultant large area of flat roof. The concerns in relation to this design feature are noted, particularly when regard is given to the prominence of the building, opposite a road junction. However, this element of the proposal would be comparable to the finish of the existing side extension which appears as an acceptable addition to the building. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the proposed crown roof would not be harmful when viewed from the street.
7. In addition, due to the lower level of the appeal building, the bulk of the extension would remain considerably lower than No 26. Moreover, the proposed crown roof would limit the visual bulk of the addition. This would have the effect of ensuring that the remaining gap between the two properties would be commensurate with others found within the street. Therefore, despite the Council's design guidance in relation to gaps between buildings, I am satisfied that the proposed extension would be suitably sympathetic to the existing building and would not lead to a terracing effect within the streetscene. I am also therefore satisfied that the proposal would not harm the setting of the Radlett (North) Conservation Area. Accordingly, there is no need to weigh the proposal against public benefits.
8. For the reasons identified above, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore comply with Policies SP1, SP2 and CS22 of the Hertsmere Local Plan, Development Plan Document, Core Strategy (2013) (CS), Policies SADM3 and SADM30 of the Hertsmere Local Plan, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) (DMPP) as well as guidance contained within the adopted Planning and Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

(2006) and draft Planning and Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2016). Taken together, these promote sustainable development with high quality design.

Car Parking

9. The proposal would increase the size of the dwelling, and therefore, according to the Council's parking standards, it should provide 4 off-street car parking spaces. The site benefits from a driveway and a garage and therefore 3 spaces can realistically be provided off-street. However, this falls short of the Council's guidelines. Despite this, I have no compelling evidence before me that the increased size of the dwelling would increase the number of cars associated with it. In addition, even if it were to increase demand, I also have no evidence before me that this would give rise to specific concerns, especially in relation to highway safety.
10. Accordingly, in the absence of any substantive evidence in relation to the actual effect of the proposal, I conclude that it would continue to provide suitable car parking provision. It would therefore comply with Policies SP1 and SP2 of the CS which promote sustainable development.
11. In refusing planning permission, the Council have also referred to Policy SADM3 of the DMPP. Although this makes reference to off-street car parking provision, it is in the context of a policy that refers to new residential development. Accordingly, it is not relevant to a proposal for a residential extension.

Other Matters and Conditions

12. The proposal would introduce a high-level window to the side elevation of the new extension. However, the drawings make it clear that this window would be glazed with obscure glass and would be non-opening. The proposal would therefore not harm the privacy levels for the occupants of neighbouring properties. I also note the comments in relation to light levels received by the adjacent neighbour. However, due to land levels and the remaining space between the buildings, I am satisfied that the proposal would not impact existing light levels.
13. Due to my findings identified above, conditions are necessary in the interests of clarity and precision to establish the time limit for commencing development, as well as to list the approved drawings. In addition, a condition is necessary to ensure the materials to be used match those found within the existing building.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons identified above, the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission be granted.

Martin Chandler

INSPECTOR