The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2020

by R Jones BA(Hons)DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3251924
Pincio, Gate End, Northwood HA6 3QG

- 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 and Mrs Chapman against the decision of London Borough of Hillingdon.
- The application Ref 8954/APP/2019/3818, dated 26 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2020.
- The development proposed is described as 'erection of single storey front extension, front rooflight, porch and rear dormer.'

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for development described as 'erection of single storey front extension, front rooflight, porch and rear dormer' at Pincio, Gate End, Northwood HA6 3QG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 8954/APP/2019/3818, dated 26 November 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan; 4309/01 and 4309/02A.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the Council's decision notice and the appeal form as it is more precise than the description on the planning application form.

Main Issue

3. Whilst the proposal includes a rear dormer extension and front rooflight, the Council have not raised issue with these elements of the scheme in their decision. I have no reason to reach a contrary conclusion.

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Gatehill Farm Estate Area of Special Local Character.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a detached bungalow known as 'Pincio' located at the end of Gate End, a small cul-de-sac with a verdant appearance. The wider surrounding area, comprising part of the Gatehill Farm Estate Area of Special Local Character (ASLC) is characterised by its planned layout of generally large houses within spacious plots and open, mature landscaped front gardens. Gate End is fairly typical of the character of ASLC.

6. Pincio is modest in scale compared to its neighbours, set on a narrow plot. The bungalow fills much of the width of its plot, with the original L-shaped plan infilled by a conservatory on the front elevation. It has a simple hipped roof form and sits comfortably within its setting benefitting from a generous front garden. I agree with the Council that the bungalow quietly contributes to the ASLC.

7. The proposed front extension would replace the conservatory and whilst projecting the mass of the bungalow forward to align with the existing front elevation, it would remain set well back from the road behind the front garden. The simple flat crown roof would be only around 3.4m in height and although not a particular characteristic of the area, where roof styles are varied, its design would maintain the low rise form of the bungalow minimising the prominence of the extension.

8. Although the open gabled porch would project forward of the building line and slightly jar with the existing hipped roof, I find it would articulate the front elevation rather than detract from the overall architectural composition of the bungalow.

9. Overall, the size, scale and design of the extension means that the narrow plot would not be further emphasised, the bungalow would remain modest, subservient to its larger neighbours, and the open, spacious character of the area would not materially change.

10. I conclude, therefore, that the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Gatehill Farm Estate Area of Special Local Character. It would accord with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One – Strategic Policies (adopted November 2012) which state that new development should achieve a high quality of design and that the Council will seek to conserve and enhance the environment, including locally recognised features such as ASLCs. It would also accord with Policies DMHB1 and DMHB11 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (adopted January 2020) (DMP) which requires development to harmonise with its local context and positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness.

11. Finally, the proposal would accord with DMP policies DMHB5 and DMHD1 which, amongst other things, require extensions in ASLCs to be subservient, respect the architectural style of the original building and not dominate the street scene.

12. The Council refers to DMP Policy DMHB6, however, as it relates to new houses in the Gatehill Farm ASLC it is not relevant here.

Conditions and conclusion

13. The Council have suggested the standard implementation, approved plans and matching materials conditions. Such conditions are necessary in order to define the terms of the permission and protect the character and appearance of the area. The Council have also requested details of demolition, building works, tree protection measures and landscaping. I note that the appeal site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 171) which identifies an individual tree (T52) centrally located in the rear garden of, but well away from, the bungalow. Because of this, and the location of Pincio within a well-established landscaped residential area, the additional conditions are not necessary.

14. For the reasons set out above, and taking all other matters into account, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR