



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2020

by L McKay MA MRTPI

Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd November 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/20/3254361 72 Lawrence Drive, Ickenham UB10 8RW

- 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 Tony Pierson against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 36895/APP/2020/770, dated 3 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing garage and erection of double side extension and part double part single rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Lawrence Drive is a residential street mostly comprising pairs of dwellings of similar age and design, up to and including the appeal property. These pairs are generally symmetrical with hipped roofs, central chimneys and a mix of brick and rendered elevations. Although many of these dwellings have been extended in various ways, they remain in general harmony with each other in terms of their character and appearance. Gaps between dwellings are largely consistent in size, other than where properties have garages to the side. This regular spacing and consistent design, together with modest and relatively open front gardens, create an open character and are important in defining the character and appearance of the area. Beyond the appeal site, the style of dwellings changes to a group of terraces arranged around the end of the cul-de-sac, with gabled roofs and expanses of white cladding. As such, this end of the road is of markedly different character.
4. The appeal site and the attached neighbour No 70 have different width plots, however the dwellings are otherwise of similar scale and design, other than the modest garage to the side of No 72. The symmetry of the roof form of the pair has however been significantly altered by the recent hip-to-gable roof extension and large rear dormer at the appeal site, undertaken as permitted development. These dwellings are particularly visible in the street scene due to their siting opposite a road junction, while a footpath and open space to the rear also provide views of the rear. Consequently, this asymmetry is relatively prominent from public

- viewpoints. There are however several other examples of roof alterations nearby, and as such it does not appear particularly out of place in the street scene.
5. Due to its width and gable roof form, the proposed two-storey side extension would significantly increase the overall scale of No 72 and exacerbate the asymmetry of the pair. The gable roof would be lower than the main ridge and would resemble that of No 74, however that is a different style of dwelling, and the appeal property is visually much more closely related to No 70 due to their similarity of design. As such, the proposed side extension would not harmonise with its attached neighbour or integrate well with the surrounding area, and would detract from the distinctive character of this part of Lawrence Drive.
 6. Due to its width, the two-storey part of the proposed rear extension would obscure most of the rear elevation of the existing dwelling. As a result, it would appear overscaled and out of proportion with the original property. The mix of roof forms of the proposed extensions and dormer would create an awkward intersection, which would emphasise the bulk of the various roofs and the cumulative scale of additions to the original dwelling.
 7. The proposed extensions would partly obscure views of the side of the dormer from the road, however part would still be visible above the roof, and the whole of the rear elevation would be clearly visible from the footpath and open space behind the site. The footpath between Nos 72 and 74 would mean that the remaining gap between the two properties would be consistent with the spacing of other dwellings in the area. However, the scale of the proposals and the awkward roof forms would be clearly visible from the public realm.
 8. Overall, therefore, due to their form and massing, the proposed two storey extensions would result in a considerable enlargement of the existing dwelling, and would not appear subordinate to it. For the reasons above, the proposals would not respect the design of the original property and would detract from the appearance of the existing dwelling. Combined with the existing roof extension, they would have an adverse cumulative impact on the character and appearance of the area.
 9. The existing garage is similar to others in the area and while it is not in particularly good condition, due to its relatively small scale, its removal would result in only a very minor enhancement of the area, which would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
 10. Accordingly, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, and would conflict with Policy BE1 of the Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) and Policies DMHD 1, DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2), which together require development to achieve high quality design that harmonises with the local context and is well integrated with the surrounding area.
 11. While there are several other examples of hip-to-gable roof extensions, large dormers and two storey side extensions in the area, I have not been made aware of any which combine all of these features. Several of the extensions referenced by the appellant are of some age and are not of particularly sympathetic design, and have significantly altered the appearance of the original properties. They are not widespread however, and as such have not materially altered the character and appearance of the area. Moreover, it appears to me that these are the types of development which the more stringent criteria in Policy DMHD1 seek to avoid. The more recent extensions all still appear to predate the recently adopted LPP2, and as such were not considered under the same policy context. These other extensions are not therefore directly comparable with the appeal proposal, and

their presence does not justify the harm that I have identified from the appeal proposal.

12. If the occupiers of No 70 were to undertake a loft conversion, as the appellant suggests, the pair of dwellings would potentially regain a degree of symmetry. However, there is no compelling evidence before me that they intend to do so, or what form any such roof extensions would take, particularly given the degree of design flexibility afforded by permitted development rights. In any event, extensions to the attached neighbour would not address the harm that I have identified from the cumulative scale of the existing and proposed extensions.

Other Matters

13. The appeal site is adjacent to the Ickenham Village Conservation Area (CA), which includes the open space to the rear of the site. The CA derives considerable significance from the built form and layout of the residential areas within it, and the green spaces and substantial historic buildings interspersed between them.
14. The appeal proposals would be visible from part of the CA, and it was therefore appropriate for the Council to advertise it as having the potential to impact on the designated heritage asset. However, the appeal site is part of a line of houses which create a backdrop of residential development to the CA, and which include various large roof extensions and alterations. In this context, the proposals would not significantly change the nature of views into or out of the CA, or its residential setting, and as such, would preserve the significance of the CA. For the reasons above however, the proposals would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and Lawrence Drive, and the absence of harm to the nearby CA would not outweigh those more localised adverse impacts.
15. I appreciate that the appellant sought the advice of the Council when seeking to extend, which has led to them undertaking alterations to the dwelling in anticipation of a further planning permission. However, while I have some sympathy for their situation, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest, and as such the appellant's personal circumstances do not outweigh the harm that I have identified. While the appellant suggests that they would be willing to amend the scheme, the proper way to achieve this would be through a further application to the Council.
16. There were no objections to the proposals, and they would not significantly adversely affect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. However, these are neutral matters which do not weigh in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR