



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 23 November 2020

by Rachel Walmsley MSc, MA, BSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/20/3257145
249 Great West Road, Hounslow, TW5 0DG

- 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 Tarnjeet Singh Chopra against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00505/249/P1, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is proposed part single part double storey side and rear extension, front porch and vehicular access and proposed dropped kerb.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. These are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and on pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The residential area within which the appeal site sits is characterised by frontage properties, many of which are semi-detached. Properties have been altered and the balanced form and style of semi-detached houses has been lost in places. At the appeal site the original symmetry of the appeal property with its adjoining neighbour has been lost with a hip to gable alteration and at No 251 with a first-floor side extension. However, the overall form of the semi-detached houses creates some uniformity to the street scene. Furthermore, catslide roofs are a feature which set the houses apart from the more traditional forms of semi-detached houses within the wider area.
4. Notwithstanding the set-down and set-back of the first-floor side extension proposed, and its size in metres squared, it would increase the scale and mass of the existing house considerably. In doing so, it would change the form of the host dwelling in such a way that its original character would be lost. The first-floor side extension would also exacerbate the disruption to the symmetry of the house with its adjoining neighbour. As such, the development would appear unduly dominant and incongruous causing harm to the form of the host dwelling and its character as a semi-detached house.
5. Porches in the street give some consistency to the character of the area, not least because of consistencies in design and scale and their shared position

below a first-floor window. The porch to the host dwelling complements the form and design of the porch at No 251, reinforcing the properties as a pair of semi-detached houses. The proposed porch, off-set from the first-floor window and with a prevalence of brickwork would have little visual connection to existing porches or to the porch at No 251. As such, it would appear incongruous in the street scene and would be harmful to the appearance of the properties as a pair of semi-detached houses.

6. The diagram on page 30 of the Residential Extension Guidelines (2017) (SPD) alludes to a particular style and design of porch as being acceptable. However, common sense suggests that one style of porch would not complement every property. Indeed, the guidance states the need for porches to respect the appearance of the house and not dominate the character of the street. For the reasons given, I have found that this would not be the case.
7. I have had regard to examples of other developments before me. Whilst it appears that the Council have given permission for developments like the appeal proposal, they do not exhibit the catslide roofs nor do they have the same site context. Furthermore, for the cases that I have plans for, the developments are narrower than that proposed. For these reasons, fair and reasonable comparisons cannot be made with the appeal proposal. Notwithstanding this, each case must be decided on its own merits, according to the facts and circumstances pertaining to that case, and it is on this basis that I have decided the appeal.
8. All in all, for the reasons given, I have found that the development would be harmful to the form of the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area and as a result would be contrary to policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Local Plan (2015) and the SPD which, amongst other things, seek development that complements the original building and responds positively to local context.

Highway safety

9. The crossover proposed exceeds the width recommended in policy EC2 of the Local Plan (2015) and the Residential Crossovers and Off-Street Parking Policy (2016). This would create a greater area of potential conflict between vehicles moving on and off the site and pedestrians using the adjoining footpaths. Furthermore, the difficult juxtaposition of the crossover with the car parking spaces would create an awkward movement of vehicles on and off the drive, exacerbating the harm found.
10. The large crossover would also restrict the amount of on-street parking available. I have seen no evidence of a competition for parking on street and therefore the development would not have a discernible effect in this regard. However, given the notable size of the crossover proposed, the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians would have a harmful effect on pedestrian safety.
11. I have had regard to the revised scheme, submitted for information only. Whilst this crossover would be narrower in width, its awkward alignment with the parking spaces would be harmful to highway safety.
12. The visibility splays would meet the requirements set out in the Residential Crossovers and Off-Street Parking Policy (Parking Policy) but part of the splay would lie outside the applicant's control. Notwithstanding the approach taken

by the Council previously, it would be unreasonable to condition any consent with a reliance on a third party. However, the parking policy states that where all or part of the splay lies across land outside the applicant's control, a relaxation to this requirement may be considered, taking into account the amount of pedestrian activity along the footway and the width of the footway.

13. I am not aware of the footpath nearest to the appeal site being heavily trafficked. Indeed, it seems reasonable that the majority of pedestrians would use the footpath nearest to the highway given that it continues the footpath down the road. Therefore, if sight lines were restricted, there would not be a discernible affect on pedestrian safety.
14. Nonetheless, this does not mitigate the harm found with regards to the crossover proposed. And so, for the reasons given, the development would have a harmful effect on pedestrian safety and would conflict with policy EC2 of the Local Plan and the Parking Policy which, amongst other things, seek development that avoids adverse impacts on the transport network.

Other Matter

15. I note the lack of harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers but this is not a matter which justifies allowing the development which I have found to be otherwise harmful.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the development would be contrary to the development plan. There are no material considerations to suggest a decision other than in accordance with the development plan and therefore the appeal is dismissed.

R Walmsley

INSPECTOR