
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2021

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 October 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/21/3276162

4 Harvil Road, Ickenham UB10 8AJ

- 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 J Hayer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 76195/APP/2021/478, dated 3 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is part single storey/part two storey side and rear extension incorporating roof alterations. Widening of existing vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - (i) the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - (ii) the highway safety in the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling with a single storey attached garage to the side located in a mature well-established residential area. Harvil Road is characterised by detached properties of varied styles and design with gabled and hipped roofs set back from the road within spacious landscaped plots. No. 4 Harvil Road is a traditional two storey property with a mixture of yellow brick and red hung tiles at first floor level on the front of the house with a distinctive part hipped, part dutch-hip tiled roof.
4. The appeal proposal would entail the construction of a part two storey/part single storey side extension that would be set-in about 0.5m from the front elevation at first floor level and set back from the common shared side boundary. The two storey extension would extend across the full width of the house and would be stepped down below the ridge of the host property with a hipped tiled roof. The proposal would also involve the construction of a single storey flat roofed rear extension and a new hipped roof over the main house.

5. Policy DMHD1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies 2020 states that two storey side extensions and alterations should be subordinate to the main dwelling. Policy DMHD1 specifies two storey side extensions should be set back a minimum of 1m behind the front elevation of the house and stepped down below the main ridge in the order to ensure they are subordinate to the main house. Policy DMHD1 also specifies that the raising of a main roof above the existing ridgeline will generally not be supported.
6. The appeal property is on a relatively spacious plot and as such the extensions would not appear overlarge, relative to the overall plot size. Whilst the new hipped roof over the main house would have a comparable ridge height to the host property and would be seen in the context of the current varied roof heights of the surrounding properties, the scale and form of the proposed two storey side extension built in line with the front of the main house and the new hipped roof would nevertheless still be a significant addition relative to the main property.
7. As such, although set in at first floor level and stepped down at roof level, the proposed side extension and the new hipped roof, would result in substantial bulk at the side and over the main dwelling that would be out of character with the more modest traditional form and appearance of the host building.
8. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's prominent position, where the proposed side extension and new hipped roof would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Harvil Road. The proposed two storey side extension and roof alterations, by virtue of their scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from its architectural integrity. As such, I consider that the proposed side extension and roof alterations would result in incongruous and out-of-keeping additions that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.
9. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the design and layout of the proposed extension and roof alterations have been carefully considered in order to take into account the character of the host property, including the existing forward projecting attached garage and to minimise any impacts on the area. However, whilst the use of matching materials and fenestrations together with the boundary treatment would assist in integrating the proposal with the host property and the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed two storey side extension and roof alterations would adversely harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would be contrary to the overall design aims of Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies DMHB11, DMHB12 and DMHD1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies 2020. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals, including residential extensions, will be of a high standard of design that harmonise with the local context and make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of layout, form, scale and materials.

Highway safety

11. The proposal would involve the widening by 1.2m of the existing vehicular access/cross over from the site to 5.29m onto the adjacent highway where a 30mph speed limit applies. An established hedge runs along the front boundary of the site and the road in the vicinity of the access has a straight and wide alignment with street lighting and footpath provision.
12. For this class of road, the Council's Highway Officer states that the crossover width (in exceptional circumstances) may be widened to match the width of the hardstanding up to maximum of 4.2m or 50% of the width of the frontage of the property (whichever is the smaller) in accordance with the Council's domestic vehicle footway crossover policy. The Council's Highway Officer has objected as the proposal would not meet these requirements. Paragraph 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework) states that decisions should take into account whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users. Paragraph 111 of the Framework goes on to state that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
13. From the evidence provided and from my observations on site, I consider that this section of Harvil Road is sufficiently safe and suitable to cater for the limited traffic movements from the host property. Due to the current configuration of the site and the proposed access arrangements, vehicles moving into and out of the site would be travelling and manoeuvring at low speeds. The current road conditions on the straight section of this residential road would allow sufficient visibility for vehicles to enter and leave the site safely and minimise any conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians.
14. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on highway safety. The proposal would be consistent with Policies DMT2 and DMT6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies 2020 which, amongst other things, require development proposals to have safe and efficient vehicular access to the highway network and vehicle parking. It would also accord with the Framework that seeks to ensure developments achieve safe and suitable access to the site for all users (paragraph 110), highway safety (paragraph 111) and create places which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles (paragraph 112).

Other Matters

15. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellant. However, the existing side extensions and roof alterations on the properties within the surrounding area have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme. In any event, each proposal falls to be assessed primarily on its own merits and I am unaware of the full circumstances associated with these other cases.
16. I note the appellant's comments regarding the various benefits arising from the proposal including the scheme's high quality design and the improvement of highway and pedestrian safety within and adjacent to the site. While I have given them some weight, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

17. Notwithstanding my findings on the lack of harm to highway safety, this is significantly outweighed by the harm found regarding the character and appearance of the host property and the area. The proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR