



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 26 October 2021 by A Coombes

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3279233

Site Address: 64 The Crossways, Hounslow TW5 0JP

- 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 N Paul against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00329/64/P3, dated 4 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is part first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I have had regard to this as a material consideration however, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The main parties were provided an opportunity to comment on the updated Framework and have confirmed that the alterations do not impact upon the submitted appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at number 66 The Crossways, with regard to overbearing.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is a two-storey, semi-detached property that has undergone previous extensions. It is located on a residential street that is largely characterised by semi-detached properties, though there are two distinct styles. The appeal site is styled with a front gable feature and hipped side roof at the rear. The proposal would introduce an infill extension at first floor level, which would be situated on top of the existing ground floor extension.

Character and Appearance

6. Cumulatively, the extended elements would cover the entire width of the rear façade and would not be subservient to the original dwelling. Whilst the extension would follow the roof height of the existing first-floor element, this would sit above the eaves height and would be an awkward and incongruous addition especially when seen close to the side of the dwelling. Currently the appeal site is largely symmetrical with the adjoining property, however the development would harmfully alter this symmetry. Although views of the extension from public vantage points would be very limited, it would be clearly seen from within the site and a number of neighbouring properties and therefore harm would still arise.
7. The appellant has provided information relating to an implemented scheme at 72 The Crossways. Although there are similarities with the design, the permitted extension, subject to that particular application, at 72 is smaller than that which is subject to this appeal and did not alter the relationship between the eaves and the flat roof element which was already pre-existing. Extensions of this nature are not so prevalent to have become a significant part of the character of this area and this example does not mitigate or outweigh the harm that has been found.
8. For the reasons given above the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would not comply with Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (HLP). Together these Policies require development to be of a high-quality design that responds well to its context and do not harm the character and appearance of a building.

Living Conditions

9. In terms of siting, the appeal site already has a close relationship with 66 The Crossways. Number 66 has not been extended at first floor level and therefore the rear façade is set back from that of the appeal site. Due to this relationship, the appeal site is highly visible from first floor habitable windows in the neighbouring property. As the development would add bulk at first-floor level, it would increase the dominance of the appeal site and the sense of enclosure to 66 The Crossways. Even if the development met the 45-degree rule, there would be significant bulk visible resulting in an oppressive form of development harming outlook from habitable rooms. This would be detrimental to the living conditions of the occupiers of this dwelling.
10. Regard has again been given to the scheme at 72 The Crossways, which was provided by the appellant. However, due to a distinct change in character, the relationship between 72 and 74 The Crossways is different to that of the appeal site and the neighbouring property. Furthermore, the alterations that have been made to 74 The Crossways reduce overbearing from 72.
11. For the reasons given above the development would be detrimental to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers, with regard to overbearing. It would not comply with Policies CC2 and SC7 of the HLP, which expects development to provide adequate outlook and avoid creating an unacceptable sense of enclosure. Policy CC1 is also cited in the reason for refusal but I do not find it to be relevant to living conditions.

Other Matters

12. It is understood that the appellant has expanding accommodation needs, as this would result in a private benefit for the appellant, I give this factor limited weight. However, the harm that has been found in respect of character and appearance and living conditions would not be outweighed by the personal circumstances of the appellant.
13. Reference has been made to Policies D1 and D3 of the London Plan (2021) and the related supporting text, including that respecting character and accommodating change should not be seen as mutually exclusive and in respect of the optimisation of a site's capacity. The development would result in harm to the character of the area in a manner that would not accommodate positive change. Any optimisation of the capacity of a site must be considered in the context of the collective policies in the London Plan, and the development plan as a whole to take account of the character and appearance of the area. For the above reasons harm would arise which would not be outweighed by the marginal increased optimisation of a single residential, dwelling.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. The proposal would not accord with the development plan when taken as a whole. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Coombes

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR