

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 December 2021

by Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2022

Appeal Ref. APP/F5540/D/21/3280154
77 Cambridge Road, Hounslow TW4 7BB

- 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 Naresh Kaul against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application ref. 00196/77/P7, dated 16 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "*PROPOSAL FOR PART SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for "*Erection of a single storey side extension following the demolition of the existing side extension*" at 77 Cambridge Road, Hounslow TW4 7BB in accordance with the terms of the application ref. 00196/77/P7, dated 16 October 2020, 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 plan numbered: 77CR/22072020/REV-C.
 - 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 matters

2. The proposal is more accurately described on the Council's decision notice as "*Erection of a single storey side extension following the demolition of the existing side extension*". I see that this description is repeated at section E of the appeal form. The Council dealt with the scheme on this basis and so shall I.
3. In July 2021, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published, replacing the 2019 edition. I have had regard to this document, but it is evident that the substance of the Framework, as it relates to the sole main issue in this case, has not changed.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area including the local street scenes.

Reasons

5. Cambridge Road is primarily residential in character. It contains a variety of dwellings along its length. No. 77 is at the end of a short terrace of 2-storey houses (nos 77-81) and next to the junction with Standard Road. On the other side of this junction, on the same northern side of Cambridge Road, is the property at no. 67. No. 77 has single storey rear and side extensions, the former extension having been built pursuant to a planning permission (ref. 00196/77/P5) issued in 1985. The other 2 properties in the same terrace have similar rear extensions to the one at no. 77. No. 67 has been extended at single storey level to the rear and the side, the latter extension having received planning permission in 2018 under ref. 00196/67/P7.
6. The Council is concerned that the replacement single storey side extension would be attached to the existing single storey rear extension and be prominently sited on the corner of the junction. The Council points to its Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD) which states in the section (4.4) concerning single storey side extensions on corner plots that "...any wrap around proposal that connects a side extension to a rear extension on a corner plot will be refused."
7. The Council's SPD clearly carries weight as a material consideration in decision making. However, the SPD is not development plan policy in itself although the text quoted above from section 4.4 is worded as if it could be. I note that other paragraphs in the SPD which are similarly aimed at discouraging certain types of development carry the words "normally" or "generally" before the words "be refused". In having regard to the design guidance in the SPD, the document should not be applied prescriptively to the exclusion of all other factors, including the physical circumstances and context of a site. Moreover, if it is going to be applied fairly, there needs to be at least some recognition about how closely an existing situation squares up to the guidelines in the document.
8. The existing single storey side extension is virtually flush with the main front wall of the house, contains a separate front entrance door next to the main entrance and is constructed of timber and plastic sheeting which is out of keeping with the render and tiles used in the host property. All those characteristics would conflict with the guidance in the SPD, if the existing single storey side extension was being proposed now. These unsatisfactory visual outcomes are apparent to observers viewing the property from either road. Added to that, it is not fit for purpose as the external materials are in a poor condition and the internal space it provides is not properly accessible from the main dwelling.
9. The proposed single storey side extension would be deeper and higher than the existing one and thus more prominent, but it would be well executed in terms of its roof style and general built form. There would be nothing contrived or incongruous about its appearance. It would not be a wrap-around L-shaped extension in itself but since it would reach as far back as the rear wall of the single storey rear extension it would give the impression of being part of one. However, I agree with the appellant that the overall effect would not be

materially different in that regard to what was permitted and built at no. 67 in the relatively recent past, regardless of exactly how or at what point the side and rear extensions contact each other at those respective properties. This other case is an important material consideration. It is a point well made by the appellant that the appeal scheme will result in a somewhat tidier overall appearance than is displayed at no. 67, where there is a mismatch of building heights, roof types and materials at the side and rear.

10. Of great importance, in my view, is how the proposed single storey side extension would accurately reflect the design of the main house and the rear extension, remain secondary in size and appearance and respect the guidance in the SPD on proportion, position and design. As there is no dwelling next to the eastern side wall of no. 77 and as the footways and carriageway on Standard Road are reasonably wide, this extension would not be perceived as a visually cramped or overly dominant form of development in the local street scenes. In a broad sense, the resulting building would achieve a closer visual harmony with the building on this street it is viewed and compared against, that being no. 67. This in turn would bring about a more balanced appearance to this end of Standard Road close to its junction with Cambridge Road.
11. Noting the proposed use of matching facing materials, I consider that the proposed development would represent a visually appropriate solution, exhibit a high standard of design, be sufficiently complementary, sympathetic and subordinate to the parent building and be respectful of the established street scenes along Cambridge Road and Standard Road.
12. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area including the local street scenes. As the development would be an example of high-quality design and would safeguard and enhance the qualities and character of this built environment and involve the acceptable extension and alteration of a residential property, showing sufficient respect for the SPD when viewing the case and the guidance in the round, there would be no conflict with the aims of Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030. There would also be compliance with the key design themes in the Framework insofar as they relate to achieving well-designed places.
13. The scheme will plainly enhance the quality of life for the occupiers of no. 77 by providing additional living accommodation for the appellant and his family, including his father. The extension will be specially adapted to meet the needs of the appellant's father whose medical circumstances are now such that he has a protected characteristic for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. I have had due regard to the PSED but it does not automatically follow from the PSED that the appeal should succeed. However, the appellant's father would be put at a disadvantage if a refusal of planning permission led to a situation where he could no longer be cared for by family members in his own home. The equality implications add some weight to my overall conclusion that the appeal should be allowed.
14. In addition to a condition setting a time limit for the commencement of development, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the relevant approved drawing is necessary as this provides

certainty. I have also imposed the Council's other suggested condition on materials to ensure that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality.

15. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised and the absence of objections from local residents, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

Andrew Dale

INSPECTOR