



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2022

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Thursday 3 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3281760

81 The Vale, Hounslow TW5 9HS

- 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 Surinder Dhesi against the decision of London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01146/81/P3, dated 28 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a 'hip to gable and dormer loft conversion to existing property to incorporate a master bedroom and wet room and hip to gable roof over first floor side extension for additional storage'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an erection of a rear roof extension incorporating hip to gable conversion and three front roof windows to the house at 81 The Vale, Hounslow, TW5 9HS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 01146/81/P3, dated 28 April 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location, Aerial and Block Plan, Drawing No. PL500; Proposed Plans Combined, Drawing No. PL300; Proposed Elevations and Section Combined, Drawing No. PL400.
 - 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.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development as stated on the application form is set out above. The Council on its decision notice has described the development as the 'erection of a rear roof extension incorporating hip to gable conversion and three front roof windows to the house'. This more accurately describes the proposals as shown on the plans. I have considered the appeal on this basis and used the revised description in my formal decision above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property forms one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellinghouses (No. 81 and 79 The Vale) both of which have hipped roofs. Additionally, both dwellings have also previously undertaken two storey, hipped roof side extensions. The extensions to the properties have been carried out in a similar manner, both being set down from the ridge height of the relevant host property's main roof and with the first-floor level set back from the relevant front elevation, to form subservient additions. Consequently, the appeal property displays a general symmetry with adjoining No. 79.
5. The area surrounding the appeal property is residential in character. It predominantly consists of semi-detached dwellings but also contains other dwelling types, including bungalows and terraced properties, often displaying differing roof forms.
6. On my site visit I observed that many properties nearby had also been extended in a variety of forms, including the addition of large dormer windows and several hip to gable extensions. Where examples of hip to gable extensions had taken place, it was frequently not replicated on the adjoining property. As such, there were several properties in the surrounding area that shared a similar appearance to the current appeal proposal.
7. The proposed works to the appeal property would alter both the existing main roof structure and the roof as it extends over the existing two-storey side extension. Both elements would be altered from hipped to gable ends. However, the proposed ridge height of the main roof area would remain consistent with its current height. Additionally, the proposed roof as it extends over the side extension would also maintain a set down from the ridgeline of the main roof, whilst also replicating its pitch. Consequently, despite the new roof form, the existing side extension would retain a subservient appearance to the host property.
8. I agree with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that the proposed changes to incorporate gable ends would disrupt the existing balance with No. 79. However, I do not consider it would be unduly noticeable in the context of The Vale and surrounding area. The appeal property is already viewed in a context where there have been several similar developments nearby. Accordingly, the proposals would not result in an incongruous feature and the general character of the streetscene would therefore remain.
9. With regards to the rear dormer extension, it is sizeable, and I recognise that its design would be more appropriate if it was reduced in scale to set it well within the roof face. Nevertheless, I am satisfied that the character and appearance of the property and wider surrounding area would not be harmed by this element of the proposals. This is because the dormer would not be highly visible from public vantage points, due to its location to the rear and because the appeal property's side extension would largely obscure views of it from the streetscene. As such, its overall scale would not be highly apparent. I also noticed other similar examples in the near vicinity of the site which are more visible than the proposal would likely be, due to its setting behind the existing (and proposed) side extension.
10. In forming my decision, I have had regard to the Council's Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD). I

recognise that the proposals do not fully accord with its guidelines. Nevertheless, the SPD is guidance and recognises that decisions need to take account of each development's individual circumstances. As indicated above, given the existing context that the proposed development would be viewed within, I do not consider the appeal scheme to be harmful. This is a view I have not taken lightly, but one based on my site visit and my consideration of the existing character of the area in which the appeal site sits.

11. For the reasons provided above, I conclude that the proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host property or the surrounding area. Accordingly, I find the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015 - 2030), which together seek to secure high quality design and support the extension of residential properties where these do not result in harm to the built environment. Although it would not follow certain guidelines set out in the SPD, the proposal is not harmful due to its specific context. It would also not conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to secure high quality design which takes account of the local character and reflect the local surroundings.

Conditions

12. A condition requiring matching materials is necessary in the interests of the appearance of the area. A condition is also needed to secure compliance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework and all other relevant considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR