



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2022

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/21/3287222

Sweetcroft Residential Care Home, 53 Sweetcroft Lane, Uxbridge UB10 9LE

- 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 J Somauroo (J & B Care Home Limited) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 5013/APP/2021/866, dated 5 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is construction of a first-floor side and rear extension to provide 7 bedrooms together with the conversion of the roof space to provide an additional 4 bedrooms.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of the proposal has altered from the application form to the decision notice. That on the application form adequately describes the proposal, but I acknowledge that it also includes dormer windows and a porch.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a building which the evidence indicates was originally constructed as a residential dwelling dating from the 1920's but which has since been converted to a residential care home.
5. The building falls within the Hillingdon Court Park Area of Special Local Character (ASLC). The evidence indicates that ASLC's in Hillingdon include areas that possess sufficient architectural, townscape and environmental quality to make them of considerable local value.
6. The area is characterised by predominantly residential properties, many of which retain their traditional character, set on large plots within a verdant setting.

7. This is the case at the appeal site, where the building is set within a large plot, back from the road behind a sweep of substantial and mature trees which prevail on the southern side of this section of Sweetcroft Lane.
8. Despite having been substantially altered, particularly through extensive single storey extensions to the side and rear, when viewed from Sweetcroft Lane, through the trees, the property has a modest appearance, is of limited bulk and retains some of its original character.
9. The property is set at a regular two storey height and incorporates a hipped roof which is characteristic of many of the lesser altered dwellings locally and incorporates a tall chimney stack to its western side. Given that the property does retain some of its original character, it subsequently contributes positively to the character and appearance of the ASLC.
10. Along with an enlarged porch, the proposal would add further accommodation to the property through extensions to the front, side and rear at first floor level along with the provision of a crown roof which would terminate at a height greater than the existing ridgeline and which would enable the provision of accommodation within the loft.
11. Whilst I accept that crown roofs are not an uncommon feature within the immediate area, with nearby examples in evidence both within and outside the ASLC on Sweetcroft Lane, substantial additional bulk would be added as a result of the alterations.
12. The additional bulk that would be added through the increase in the height and depth of the roof would be particularly notable from Sweetcroft Lane and from the rear garden areas of adjacent residential properties. It would significantly alter the existing roof profile and would somewhat swamp the existing property, such that the building would lose any sense of its original character. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and the ASLC.
13. The proposal would therefore be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and the ASLC. It would therefore conflict with policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012), policies DMHB 1, DMHB 5, DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies (2020) (DMP) and policies D4, D8 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) (LP).
14. Amongst other things these policies seek high quality design that is appropriate to the character of an area and local context and distinctiveness which protects the historic environment including locally recognised historic features such as Areas of Special Local Character.
15. Policy DMHD1 of the DMP would appear to have limited relevance to the proposals as it relates to alterations and extensions to residential dwellings.

Other Matters

16. I accept that the proposal would provide additional elderly persons accommodation for which there is a need. Nonetheless, I afford this matter limited weight given there is nothing compelling within the evidence to indicate that this could not be provided at the site in a manner which would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

17. I have also been provided with an appeal decision in support of the proposals. This is referenced APP/R5510/D/16/3157553 and it relates to No. 57 Sweetcroft Lane, a detached dwelling, neighbouring the appeal property.
18. Whilst that proposal included the provision of a crown roof, the report does not indicate any increase in height above the highest part of the roof being agreed. That proposal does not therefore appear to form a close comparison to the scheme before me and I subsequently afford it limited weight.

Planning balance and conclusion

19. There is no indication that the decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR