



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2022

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/21/3287716
391 Hanworth Road, Hounslow TW4 5LF

- 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 Baldev Phull against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00553/391/P2, dated 8 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a double storey side and part first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development upon:
 - The existing building and the character and appearance of the locality; and
 - The living conditions of No.393 Hanworth Road, with particular regard to access to light and sense of enclosure.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located along the south-western side of Hanworth Road which forms a number of streets in the local area that contains formally laid out speculative housing which appears to date from the early to mid-twentieth century. The local area contains pairs of semi-detached dwellings which have a symmetry in their placement with a consistent building line and setback with front gardens and low boundary walls. There are also visual gaps to the first floor level in between properties where glimpses to the tops of trees in rear gardens are experienced and is a positive characteristic of the area alongside trees to front gardens and street trees. The pairs of semi-detached dwellings have similar design characteristics with red roof tiles, the use of pebbledash, hipped roof forms, and a central coaxial chimney stack.
4. On the opposite side of the road from the appeal site the development is quite varied with a mixture of Victorian terraces, semi-detached dwellings and a mid twentieth century flatted development. Whilst these dwellings do not retain the symmetry in building design there is an inherent visual gap in between properties with an emphasis of spaciousness in and around dwellings.

5. The appeal site displays a number of positive qualities which are experienced within the street scene, being one of the characteristic semi-detached dwellings and containing many of the important design elements and original roof forms and visual gaps between properties. In this case there are glimpses to vegetation beyond which reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of the area.
6. In undertaking extensions to existing buildings, the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (LP) Policies CC1 and CC2 are design led policies which seek to achieve high quality design for new development which reflects the existing character and context of the locality. LP Policy SC7 is specific to residential extensions and seeks that extensions do not harm existing character and appearance and also seeks that the Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD) is taken into account in planning determinations. The SPD contains further specific guidance in relation to design principles and detailed design considerations that for extensions there is an emphasis on subservience and responding to the existing site and context of the locality.
7. With regards to the two storey side extension, whilst I agree with the applicant that the scheme would provide a setback from first floor level and the roof form would be set in, which would accord with the SPD guidance, the proposal would have a first floor that would be constructed to the side property boundary which would erode much of the visual gap between the properties. I agree with comments expressed by interested parties that this would be problematic if the neighbouring residence also extended and would essentially create a terraced, rather than semi-detached property.
8. Additionally, the SPD seeks that to avoid the 'terracing effect' that the two storey side extension should be set back at least a metre from the original front of the dwelling to maintain the prominence of the original building form. Whilst the extension is set back a metre at the first floor level, the extension at ground floor contains no setback which would not adhere to the SPD. Furthermore, the proposed ridge of the extension would not be set down 0.5 metres as suggested by the SPD in order to reduce subservience. The applicant's Statement of Case (SoC) mentions that there are extensions such as the proposed that have been 'constructed all over the borough' however there are no examples of similar schemes presented within the appeal documents which support this view. Having experienced the local character and appearance of dwellings within this locality, similar extensions as proposed are not characteristic of this locality.
9. Taking the above into account, the proposed two storey side extension would be incongruous to the existing building as a result of its lack of subservience regarding setbacks and roof height, which would be disproportionate to the existing dwelling, resulting in inappropriate massing and bulk which would be detrimental to the character, appearance and the local distinctiveness of the host building and locality.
10. Turning to the proposed first floor rear extension, the existing dwelling contains an original two storey rear wing which originally was half the width of the existing dwelling, however the gap at first floor level between the neighbouring dwelling appears this appears has been infilled. The ground floor has a much larger extension that runs the width of the appeal site and infills the space

around the two storey rear wing and projects further into the rear garden than the two storey rear wing. It is proposed to extend the existing rear wing at first floor level an additional 2.5 metres which would elongate the first floor of the rear wing to such an extent that it would no longer be subservient, but almost a similar length as the depth of the host dwelling. The proposed rear extension at first floor level would be clearly disproportionate and the additional visual bulk and massing would be unlike other extensions constructed within the immediate vicinity. This proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building, and the local distinctiveness of the locality.

11. Consequently, and in conclusion of this matter, when taking into account the elements of the side extension and the rear extension, the proposed scheme would not be in compliance with LP Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7, which is supported by the SPD as described above.

Living conditions

12. The main concerns raised by the Council are with regards to living conditions of No.393 Hanworth Road as a result of the sense of enclosure and overshadowing/ loss of light. No.393 Hanworth Road is located to the south-east of the appeal site and contains a two storey semi-detached property with a single storey garage along the boundary with the appeal site which has a similar projection to the rear as the ground floor of the appeal site. The rear garden of No.393 is quite large and wide with a paved area to the rear of the dwelling and a grassed lawn for the remainder of the neighbouring garden area.
13. With regards to the sense of enclosure, whilst the proposed two storey side extension would be built up to the shared boundary, the component of the proposed side extension would end at the rear of the first floor element of No.393. Whilst there may be some change to the experience of built form from within the garden of No.393 due to the presence of increased bulk; given the width and depth of the neighbouring garden and the placement of built form, this change caused by the proposed extensions would not be so significant as to cause material detriment to the neighbouring occupiers from their enjoyment of their garden from sense of enclosure. A similar assessment is had with regards to windows to the side of No.393 which face the appeal site. According to the appeal documents, the windows do not serve habitable rooms, and whilst I agree there may be some loss of outlook from these windows, it would not be to a significant degree as to be materially detrimental.
14. Turning to access to light, whilst I agree that the increased height and depth of the proposal above the boundary fence would increase the length of shadow and cause some slight increase in overshadowing; given the path of the sun, the neighbouring dwelling at No.393 and its rear garden would not be affected by overshadowing. Whilst the presence of increased built form may lead to a small decrease in light levels this would not be 'excessive' given that adequate exposure of the rear garden to light and sun is still achievable and within appropriate measures.
15. Taking the above into account, I disagree that the proposed extensions would result in unacceptable harm to living conditions as a result of sense of enclosure, or loss of light. Consequently, and in conclusion of this matter, the proposed scheme is made in accordance with LP Policies CC2 and SC7, which is accompanied by the SPD. I note that LP Policy CC1 has been utilised in the

reasons for refusal, which is a design-led policy which is not relevant to the consideration of living conditions.

Other Matters

16. I note comments from an interested party with regards to loss of view, soundproofing of party wall and road disruption. These issues are not planning issues and therefore have not been considered as part of this letter.

Conclusion

17. Whilst I have agreed with the applicant with regards to the reason for refusal around considerations around living conditions, when taken as a whole, this is not sufficient to outweigh the design policies that the proposed scheme does not comply with. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR