



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2022

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/22/3303371

12 The Drive, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8AF

- 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 George Sanghar against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 9483/APP/2022/923, dated 16 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'change and increase in height of roof of existing bungalow to accommodate loft bedrooms, and front and rear extensions'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 'conversion of roofspace to habitable use including change of roof, raising of roof ridge height and installation of two roof lights, erection of a front extension, and single storey rear extension, conversion of garage to habitable use and fenestration changes' at 12 The Drive, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8AF in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 9483/APP/2022/923 dated 16 February 2022 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 plans: Site Location Plan, 01, 02, 03, 04 and 05.
 - 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 Matter

2. The development description in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. However, a different description has been entered at part E of the appeal form which reflects that stated on the Council's decision notice. Because this description has been used by both parties, and I consider it to represent the proposal more accurately, I have used it in my formal decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Near to the appeal site, The Drive and streets which branch from it are generally characterised by detached two-storey dwellings which are set back

from the streets on generous plots. While the buildings vary significantly in design, form and architectural style, this provides for a distinctive spacious character in views along the streets, although separation provided to the sides of buildings is more variable.

5. The appeal relates to a bungalow, and proposes extensions and alterations that would together result in significant increases in the height and overall bulk and mass of the building. There would be no increase in the width of the dwelling, but it already occupies the majority of the width of the site and the Council highlights that the development would be within 90cm of the shared side boundaries, reducing to within 30cm at the roof overhang. This would be below the minimum separation of 1m sought by Policy DMHD 1 of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies 2020 ('LPP2') where two-storey side extensions are proposed. However, the set in to the sides of the dwelling at ground-floor and eaves level would be of comparable width to that currently afforded, and given that the first-floor level would be provided within the extended roof, I am not persuaded that the appeal would result in a true two-storey extension so as to conflict with this provision.
6. Moreover, the roof would slope up away from the boundaries to either side of the dwelling. I acknowledge that the angle of the slope would be steeper than that of the existing roof. Even so, the slope means that there would be separation of more than 1m between the roof and the boundaries to its sides for most of its height, and much more than 1m at the highest level. This would provide for significant spacing to either side of the upper part of the building, and I find that adequate visual separation and views between houses would be maintained. In addition, the development would not project further to the front or rear than the deepest parts of the host dwelling or the adjacent dwellings at 10 or 14 The Drive, and there would remain significant spacing to the boundaries to its front and rear. Despite the greater scale of the building and its upper bulk and mass, I find given these factors that it would sit comfortably on its plot without appearing cramped, and the existing spacious character of the area would not be harmfully diminished.
7. I appreciate that the combined extensions and alterations would result in substantial change to the form and appearance of the appeal dwelling. Taken cumulatively, I also agree with the Council that the extensions would be disproportionate, and could not reasonably be described as subordinate to the existing dwelling as would generally be sought by LPP2 Policy DMHD.
8. Nevertheless, I have not been provided with firm evidence of particular architectural or other merit that would make the dwelling worthy of retention in its current form. The Council suggests that the area is generally defined by dwellings with their original hipped roof forms intact, but I saw many nearby that have gable features, including No 10 adjacent. In this case, the gables to the front of the building would be set down notably from the ridge, and while the gables to the rear would be higher, the main roof would remain hipped to the sides in keeping with the existing dwelling and area. The rear dormer and front box addition would also be of modest height and depth, and notwithstanding its height relative to the ground-floor, the roof would not in my judgement appear unduly top-heavy or imbalanced.
9. The development would also be finished in materials to match the existing dwelling, and while there would be additional glazing, I do not agree with the

Council that the extent of the resulting fenestration would be excessive when seen against the building as a whole. The rear dormer would be close to the gables at its base, but there would be additional separation to its upper part, and given its modest scale, it would not disrupt the overall form or composition of the roof or dwelling. Noting also that public views towards the rear of the building would be at some distance, its visual impact would be limited, even without the partial screening provided by existing boundary vegetation.

10. I have not been referred to other dwellings of like overall design to that proposed, and the front box addition would be somewhat unusual. Be that as it may, I saw varied features including dormers and balconies to the front of other buildings nearby, and there is considerable diversity in the appearance and designs of development in the vicinity. Seen in this context, I am satisfied that while it would be of clearly different appearance to the existing dwelling, the development would not be striking or incongruous, and would be a sympathetic addition to the mixed street scene.
11. Furthermore, the existing dwelling on the appeal site is somewhat unusual in the area as a bungalow, and its smaller overall scale and single-storey height stand out against its much more substantial neighbours. I note that Policy DMHD 1 of the LPP2 advises that raising of a main roof above the existing ridgeline of a house will not generally be supported. In this case however, the dwelling would not exceed the height of Nos 10 or 14, and its larger overall size would be more in keeping with its neighbours. In my judgement, its increased height and scale would actually be less conspicuous and would integrate better with the street scene than the existing building.
12. I find given these factors that the development would be well designed, and would harmonise with the local context. Although the proposal would not accord fully with detailed guidelines set out in Policy DMHD 1 of the LPP2, there are material considerations which would outweigh the conflict. Overall, I conclude that there would not be unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the host building or area. As such, the proposal would accord with Policy BE1 of the Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the LPP2 insofar as they together broadly seek good design; development that is sympathetic to local context; and extensions that do not adversely affect the character, appearance or quality of the area. Furthermore, it is not a case where I find that paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that permission should be refused.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have specified the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of certainty. A condition to control the external materials of the development is also necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J Bowyer

INSPECTOR