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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2022

**by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 21 November 2022**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/22/3303950**

**Ground Floor Flat, 52 Paddington Close, Hillingdon, Hayes UB4 9QH**

- 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 Sarjit Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
  - The application Ref 68096/APP/2022/900, dated 12 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2022.
  - The development proposed is conversion of detached garage to habitable room.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

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

## Reasons

3. Paddington Close is generally characterised by two-storey dwellings of similar overall appearance. Many have associated garages, either integral to or attached to the dwellings, or in some cases within detached buildings which often include garages serving different dwellings.
4. The garage to 52 Paddington Close forms one half of a detached building which is positioned forward of No 52 and to the side of 54 Paddington Close. It is on a different orientation to No 52, and set apart from its front elevation by an area of hardstanding which extends up to a gated access onto Wayfarer Road, and which provides access to a door in the side of the garage as well as a parking space in front of 53 Paddington Close. It is also separated from the side of 54 Paddington Close by the garage to this neighbour which occupies the other half of the detached building. Given these relationships, I found that the appeal garage did not appear to share an obvious association or close visual connection with No 52, or indeed any of the other neighbours on this part of the street.
5. The proposal includes only minor external alterations to the front of the garage to provide a window set within facing brick wall in place of the existing garage door. The design and proportions of the indicated window would differ from the windows to No 52 and other neighbours, although I note that the appellant indicates that they would be open to amendments by way of a planning condition which could provide for more sympathetic glazing. Nevertheless, the alterations would give the development a clearly domestic appearance. While

the building would remain subordinate in scale to No 52, I consider that this domestication would be incongruous and visually jarring in the context of a detached outbuilding given the lack of an apparent close relationship with a host property to which it would relate.

6. I saw that some other garages in the street do appear to have been converted to habitable accommodation, but these are typically attached or very close to the host properties, with access gained either internally from the property or through its rear garden. As a consequence, they are of different character to the development before me which would stand somewhat apart from the dwellings on this part of the street.
7. I appreciate that the visual impact of the development would be localised. Nevertheless, it would be visible from Paddington Close, as well as from neighbouring properties, where I find that it would stand out as a discordant feature that would detract from the street scene.
8. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, resulting in conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies 2012 and Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies 2020. Together, these policies broadly seek development that harmonises with local context and maintains the quality of the built environment, and include requirements for good design and for alterations that do not adversely affect the character, appearance or quality of an area.
9. The proposal would make effective use of the site to create additional living space. The appellant indicates that the development would support home working which I acknowledge has become more common since the COVID-19 pandemic. However, I have no substantive information before me to demonstrate that workspace could not be accommodated within the host property, nor any firm details of demand for the space by occupiers. These factors limit the weight that I afford to the provision of the proposed space for home-working, and I find that the benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area and the resulting conflict with the development plan.

## **Conclusion**

10. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when it is read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan should be reached. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*J Bowyer*

INSPECTOR