



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2022

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/D/22/3307951
22 Westfields Road, Ealing W3 0AX

- 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 C White against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref 222424HH, dated 1 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 2 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as a loft conversion with new dormers and a hip to gable extension.
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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 host property and the area.

Procedural Matter

3. After the application the subject of this appeal was determined, an appeal decision was issued relating to a loft conversion with new dormers and a hip to gable extension at this property (Ref: APP/A5270/D/22/3300008) ('previous appeal'). I have had regard to that previous appeal in my decision.

Reasons

4. The host is a semi-detached bungalow which, together with the other pairs of bungalows in this small group, faces a square garden space. Notwithstanding some alterations, including front and rear dormer windows, and a ground floor front extension at 25 Westfields Road ('No 25'), these bungalows broadly retain a similar style, with a modest single storey scale, and a simple, hipped roofed form, thus giving the group a cohesive character.
5. The proposed front rooflights and the north facing dormer windows would be modestly proportioned and would have a limited visual impact. I also observed some other fairly small dormer windows in this group.
6. However, contrary to paragraph 5.5 of the appellant's statement, and as illustrated by drawing no. 21040/4A, the rear dormers would extend to the host's ridgeline, and virtually down to the eaves. As a result, they would cover almost the entirety of the sloping roof, giving it a top-heavy appearance.

7. In combination with the proposed hip to gable extension, given their scale and proportions, these rear facing elements would overwhelm the original building and would, in effect, give it a two storey form, and a very rectilinear flat-roofed appearance. As well as failing to appear subordinate to the host, they would be markedly at odds with the single storey, simple form of No 23, thus unbalancing this semi-detached pair.
8. As they would extend from the ridgeline virtually to the eaves, the rear dormers would be taller than at No 25, and notwithstanding the use of matching materials, the scheme as a whole would fail to reflect the character and appearance of the other bungalows in this small cohesive group.
9. I did observe some nearby bungalows which have had substantial roof level extensions, including at 26 Westfields Road. However, that example is set slightly away from this small group. The large roof level alterations to the rear of this site at 10 and 12, and 18 and 20, Norman Way, balance each other on those semi-detached pairs, whose form and character are markedly different from this property, and which sit within a fairly eclectic group of buildings. Those examples, nor the others cited in Appendix A of the appeal statement, justifies the harm that would be caused here.
10. Given the rearward siting of these harmful extensions, they would have little or no impact on the streetscene. However, notwithstanding some trees and other landscaping, they would be visible from nearby properties and their rear gardens.
11. Whilst there are differences between this proposal and the previous appeal, and I note that this scheme would not 'wrap around' the original building to the same degree, having considered it on its merits, I conclude that this proposal does not represent good design, and that it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
12. Consequently, the scheme would conflict with those parts of Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document 2013 Policy 7.4 which, in broad terms, requires good design which pays regard to local character and complements the scale of development in the area. It would also conflict with the similar stance regarding high quality design, which is sympathetic to the surrounding built environment, in Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
13. However, as London Plan 2021 Policies D4, D5 and D6 address how boroughs should deliver good design, the need for inclusive and accessible features, and providing appropriate living accommodation, they are of limited direct relevance on this issue.
14. In its favour, the scheme would provide additional accommodation for the applicant to meet his home-working needs and the requirements of his growing family and their visitors; although I share the Council's concerns that the quality of that accommodation would not be high given the limited 2 metre ceiling height, which would be below that generally required for new housing in the DCLG Technical Housing Standards 2015.
15. The appellant's personal circumstances do not outweigh the significant harm that would be caused as a result of the scheme's poor design, and its harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

16. The proposal would conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole, and having regard to all other matters raised, including representations by interested parties, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR