



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 November 2023

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11.12.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/23/3325118

29 North Drive, Hounslow TW3 1PP

- 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 Ms Dimple Thaker against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00812/29/P2, dated 23 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 9 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'ancillary accommodation to rear of garden'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Preliminary Matter

3. I have taken the description of the proposal in my banner above from the application form, although the appellant states that it may more accurately be described as 'a single storey building with accommodation in the roof space'.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The proposed outbuilding would replace an existing garage with a slightly smaller footprint, which is located in a similar position at the end of the host's long rear garden. There would be a large gap between it and the extended house, and it would be significantly lower in height and smaller in size compared to that building, thus giving it a subordinate appearance.
5. However, to facilitate the provision of a first floor in its roof space, and at 4 metres high, it would be significantly taller than the existing garage, or indeed a typical garden outbuilding. Its height, combined with its depth, width and crown roof form, would give it a substantial scale and bulk.
6. Although the appellant asserts that there are similar scale outbuildings in the area, she has not pointed me to any specific examples. On my visit I observed that many nearby properties do indeed have structures within their gardens,

but not with a combined scale, height and bulk similar to the one proposed here.

7. Additionally, this scheme's large crown roof, asymmetrical roof pitches, and flat roofed front projection would give it an awkward and incongruous form, which would exacerbate the harm caused as a result of its substantial scale and bulk. Thus, although it would not be easily seen, if at all, from public vantage points, in views from nearby dwellings and their gardens it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area.
8. In terms of its siting and height, the scheme would broadly comply with the advice in the Hounslow Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2017 ('SPD'), but for the above reasons it would conflict with those parts of Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (2015) ('HLP') which require high quality urban design, and which expect proposals to consider their context and respond to local character, having regard to matters such as massing, scale and height.

Living conditions

9. Section 4.8 of the SPD advises that outbuildings must be used in a manner incidental to the main house, with suitable uses including storage or hobby rooms; but that primary living accommodation such as bedrooms, bathrooms or kitchens will not usually be allowed. The Council maintains that the inclusion of primary living facilities here would result in harm to neighbouring occupiers' living conditions.
10. However, notwithstanding the description of the proposal as 'ancillary accommodation', the submitted drawings show that the outbuilding would be used as games/hobby rooms, with storage space, a small WC and a sink. Those facilities would indicate a use incidental to the main house.
11. Whilst the SPD also advises that outbuildings that have been designed in a way that may facilitate their use as an independent residential unit will be refused, this one can only be accessed through the garden of the house, and I am not persuaded that that is the case here. I have dealt with the proposal before me on the basis of the submitted evidence, and in any event, its use as an independent residential unit would require planning permission.
12. Typical domestic use of the proposed outbuilding by the household for purposes incidental to the main house would not give rise to a significant impact on adjacent occupiers' living conditions as a result of increased activity, noise or general disturbance. Given the gap between the proposed outbuilding and 3 The Orchard, it would not cause a significant loss of natural light to those residents. Consequently, on this issue, the scheme would not conflict with the SPD, nor with those parts of HLP Policies CC2 and SC7 which require development to minimise harm to neighbouring residents.

Other matters

13. In its favour, the scheme finds a limited measure of support from the economic and social objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, as it would provide some work for local builders and it would provide additional space for the occupants. However, as it would not be sympathetic to the local character, it would not accord with the Framework's environmental objective.

Conclusion

14. Summing up, the scheme would not harmfully impact neighbouring occupiers' living conditions, but it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. Its modest benefits would not outweigh the harm that it would cause. Consequently, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR