



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2023

by P Terceiro BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/23/3324782

84 Octavia Road, Isleworth, Hounslow TW7 6JP

- 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 Mrs Clare Ampah-Ford against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00829/84/P4, dated 24 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In order to be concise, I have only used part of the first sentence of the description of the proposed development provided in the application form on the banner heading above. The additional sentences provide a more detailed explanation of the proposed development. Nevertheless, I have had regard to the additional information provided in the description in determining the appeal.
3. There has recently been a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published by Government. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal have not been amended. As a result, I consider that there is no requirement for me to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and I am satisfied that no party's interests have been prejudiced by my approach.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and of the area; and
 - the living conditions of the occupants of 2 Howard Road with particular regard to light and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. 84 Octavia Road (No 84) and its attached semi-detached neighbour, 2 Howard Road (No 2), occupy a prominent position in the street scene, at the junction between these two roads with Unwin Road. The building is typical of the

development in the surrounding area, the street scene of which is generally characterised by pairs of semis and rows of terraces with a similar hipped roof design and materials.

6. The dwellings are positioned to address the winding roads and retain some space between their side elevations, which provides the street scene with a spacious feel. The corner plots in the vicinity, such as the appeal site and No 2, make an important contribution to the spaciousness of the area due to their deep frontages and space to the side of the dwellings.
7. The proposal would substantially extend the host dwelling at ground floor by more than the full width of the existing house. Further, its height would match the windowsill level at first floor, thereby failing to appear as a proportionate and subservient addition to the host dwelling. The extension's footprint would be contrived and, as a consequence, the shape and angles of the roof would be markedly at odds with the dwelling's simple hipped roof form. As such, the proposal would not respect the character of the host dwelling and it would fail to remain secondary in size and appearance.
8. The extension would be set back from the plot's boundary fence with Octavia Road. However, given its substantial size and scale, the proposal would be visible above the fence line and, furthermore, it would unacceptably reduce the open space within this prominent corner plot. The extension would fail to successfully integrate with its surroundings and would harm the character of the area, as the existing boundary treatment to the road would offer little mitigation against the visual harm caused by the proposal.
9. The extension would be externally finished in black stained timber under a black anodized aluminium sheeting roof and would have a contemporary appearance. There is little variation in terms of materials within the street scene. The appeal dwelling and those surrounding are externally finished in yellow stock brick and / or render, so the proposal would be markedly at odds with its surroundings and appear incongruous.
10. My attention is drawn to a planning permission granted at 2 Greenwood Road. The plans before me show that this consent is for a two-storey side extension that is less than half the width of the host dwelling and, in addition, it does not comprise a rear extension and wrap around element. As such, this scheme is not comparable to the appeal proposal.
11. The appellant references other planning permissions consented elsewhere across the estate. However, no further details regarding these developments have been provided. On this basis, I am unable to make any useful comparison between the proposal and these schemes.
12. In conclusion, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 Volume 1 (LP), which seek to secure development that responds sensitively to an area's character, support high quality design and ensure that additions do not harm the existing character and appearance of the building and its context. Additionally, the proposal would be contrary to the Residential Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which supports good quality and attractive street scenes.

Living conditions

13. The appeal site has a single storey outbuilding in the rear garden which is sited close to the dwelling's rear elevation and near No 2. In my site visit I observed that the outbuilding is staggered, so part of its wall abuts the common boundary with No 2. The boundary between the site and No 2 is defined by a wooden fence. This neighbouring dwelling contains rear windows close to the appeal site.
14. The proposal's projection beyond the rear elevation of No 2 would be limited. However, the extension would sit immediately adjacent to the shared boundary for its whole depth. As a consequence, taken together with the existing outbuilding, the proposal would result in a substantial amount of built form along the joint boundary with No 2, that would appear conspicuous when viewed from No 2's rear windows and rear garden. As such, the proposal would result in a sense of enclosure that would not be mitigated by the existing fence.
15. The pair of semis has its rear elevation facing north, and the proposal would sit to the west of No 2, so the loss of sunlight associated with the proposal would be modest and restricted to the later hours. As such, the proposal would not be harmful in this regard.
16. Overall, while I am satisfied that the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupants of No 2 with regard to light, I conclude that it would cause harm in terms of outlook. Thus, the proposal would be contrary to Policies CC2 and SC7 of the LP, where these policies seek to minimise harm to neighbouring residents. Further, the proposal would fail to accord with the SPD, as it would not protect residential amenity.

Other Matters

17. The appellant's Statement of Case suggests some amendments that could be undertaken to the proposal including the roof form, materials and boundary wall. However, these alternative schemes are not before me as amended plans and therefore I have determined the appeal based on the submitted plans.
18. It has been brought to my attention that the extension is to be occupied by an elderly person with mobility difficulties. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty ('the PSED') contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act'), which sets out the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not. The Act sets out the relevant protected characteristics which includes disability and age. Since there is the potential for my decision to affect persons with a protected characteristic, I have had due regard to the three equality principles set out in Section 149 of the Act. However, they are qualified rights and interference may be justified where in the public interest. The concept of proportionality is key.
19. I have carefully noted the appellant's evidence in this regard and I appreciate the contribution the additional space and proposed alterations to the dwelling would make to the appellant's personal circumstances. Nevertheless, based on the evidence before me, I am not satisfied that an alternative extension scheme could not achieve the living conditions improvements required without having a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property

and of the area, as well as on the living conditions of the occupants of No 2 in regard to outlook. Therefore, the benefits of the proposal in this regard do not outweigh the harm that I have identified. My actions in this respect, and my decision therefore on the appeal, are a proportionate response to the requirements of the Act and those of the plan led system.

20. I understand that, because of the proposal, a 3-bedroom house would be released. Although this would be of benefit, I am not persuaded that this proposal is the only means to achieve this.

21. The proposal would have solar collectors installed on its roof and I understand that the external materials would result in a well-insulated building requiring minimal energy use. Although this would be beneficial in terms of energy efficiency, it would not outweigh the harm to the character of the area and to the living conditions of the occupants of No 2 in terms of outlook that I have identified above.

Conclusion

22. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

P Terceiro

INSPECTOR