



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2024

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/24/3337766

1 The Ridgeway, Acton, London, W3 8LW

- 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 J Raja against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref, 00940/1/P2, dated 28 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 9 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. No 1 is an end-terraced house situated on a corner plot at the junction of The Ridgeway with Gunnersbury Avenue. It is a two-storey house with a single-storey rear extension across the whole of the rear elevation. The extension comprises what appears to be an older component with a hipped roof that adjoins a similar extension at the neighbouring No 3, and a newer flat-roofed element. The house has a prominent brick chimney on the side elevation which splits into two separate stacks below first-floor level. In common with the rest of the dwellings in the terrace, the appeal property has a part half-timbered, part brick-built front elevation. This arrangement continues round the front section of the side elevation up to the chimney stack. The rear of the property is pebble-dash rendered.
4. The proposed development would involve the construction of a flat-roofed side extension projecting out a little over 3 metres and running alongside the existing side elevation, including the existing rear extension. It would be set back a little from the front elevation.
5. Policy CC1 of the Council's Local Plan Volume One (LP) indicates that new development should conserve and take opportunities to enhance particular features or qualities that contribute to an area's character, and respond to any local architectural vernacular that contributes to an area's character. Policy CC2 indicates that new development should respond meaningfully and sensitively to

the site, its characteristics and constraints, and the layout and grain of surrounding buildings. Policy CC4 indicates that, in the case of alterations or extensions to a heritage asset, a proposal should demonstrate that it is in keeping with the character of the building and harmonious with its surroundings and the wider character of the area. Policy SC7 indicates that residential extensions and alterations should complement the original building; harmonise with adjoining properties and maintain the character of the general street scene and the character of private spaces; and, in the case of an extension, should have regard to the quality, character, materials and scale of the principal building.

6. The Council contends that the proposed side extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the house, its side garden and the CA because of its width, depth and scale; because of the design of the roof; and because of the loss of the existing dual side feature chimney. It would be an intrusive addition, out of scale, character and appearance of the existing host property and surrounding dwellings.
7. The appellant contends that the proposal meets the Council's design requirements; that it would be proportionate to the existing dwelling; that its use of materials would be appropriate; that it would appear subservient to the main house; and that it would not block views of the chimney because it would not be readily visible above the side boundary treatment.
8. The appeal property is situated in the Gunnersbury Park Estate Character Area, within the overall Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area (CA). The houses along The Ridgeway are noted in the character assessment as being a positive contributor to the CA. The estate is a formally laid-out, late-1920s area of two-storey short terraced and semi-detached houses, many with half-timbering, and typically with rear service/access lanes and well-tended corner green spaces. The character appraisal notes that some features, particularly windows, doors and original boundaries have been altered, though the general character and appearance remains. The estate is subject to an Article 4 Direction to protect what remains of the original features.
9. The property has a large side garden such that house itself is set well back from the side boundary with Gunnersbury Avenue. The proposed extension would extend a little over 3 metres into the side garden, but it would be set back from the front elevation and I consider that it would appear subservient to the main house. In addition, it would not significantly intrude into the substantial openness around the junction provided by the large side garden.
10. Nevertheless, despite the above, I have significant concerns about the visual impact of the proposal on the host property and the general level of uniformity of the character and appearance of the estate as a whole. The juxtaposition of the two elements of the existing rear extension is already somewhat awkward in appearance, with the more recent flat-roofed element a little taller than the eaves of the hipped roof element to which it is attached. The proposed side extension would be flat-roofed, but would be a little lower than the existing extension and this would add to the rather confused nature and scale of the extensions around the original house.
11. In addition, the extension would cut across most of the dual chimney stacks at the ground floor of the house. The lower height of the extension would mean that more of the chimney would remain visible, but it would still be largely

obscured at ground-floor level. Moreover, whilst the extension would be constructed of matching brick, it would also cut across a large part of the pebbledash rendered elevation around the rear part of the house, adding to the over-complexity and somewhat incoherent appearance of the extensions around the house.

12. I acknowledge that the extension would be set away from the side boundary and would have only limited visibility from Gunnersbury Avenue. However, it would also be visible from the front of the property and from the service lane at the rear, albeit to a limited extent.
13. I note also that Nos 8 and 10 The Ridgeway have side chimneys of similar design to that of the appeal property. and that they have been partially obscured by side extensions built, in these cases, to infill the gap between the dwelling and the garages serving the properties. I have little information as to the history of these extensions but, unlike the appeal property, they do not occupy prominent corner plots. In any case, in my opinion they are harmful to the character and appearance of the host properties and the wider area, such that they should not be considered as precedents for the current proposal. Furthermore, there are other examples of houses with identical chimney stacks which still remain clearly visible on corner plots (e.g. Nos 20 and 61 The Ridgeway, and No 99 Princes Avenue) and which are important features within the overall character of the Estate.
14. In conclusion, I find that the proposed extension, by virtue of its design and detrimental impact on the visually important chimney, would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider Gunnersbury Park Estate, which is part of the CA. Although this harm is less than substantial, there are no public benefits of the proposal to outweigh the harm. On this basis, it would also conflict with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the LP. Accordingly, I dismiss the appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR