
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2024

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/24/3342038

2 Lynmouth Gardens, Hounslow TW5 9DZ

- 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 M Pooni against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00719/2/P1, dated 17 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 12 March 2024.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of a part first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. While the appellant has described the proposal as in the above heading, the Council has referred to it as the erection of a part single, part 2-storey rear extension. From my inspection of the plans, I consider that the Council's description more fully reflects the development sought. The Council assessed and determined the proposal on that basis, and it is against that decision that the appeal was made. I shall, therefore, take the same approach.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development firstly, on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area; and secondly, on the living conditions of the occupiers of 4 Lynmouth Gardens with particular regard to visual impact, sense of enclosure and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Planning permission is sought for a part single storey, part 2-storey extension to the rear of the appeal property, which is an end of terrace 2-storey dwelling within a predominantly residential area. The walls of the existing building are brick, and the roof is tiled with a hipped end. I saw that several properties in the same terrace as No 2 include large rear extensions. The site is not within a conservation area. The appeal dwelling is not a listed building.
5. The Council has recently issued a notice that grants prior approval (PA) for a ground floor rear addition that would extend across the full width of the main house and outwards from the rear wall by about 6-metres. As the PA scheme

is very similar to the ground floor element of the proposal before me, the lower element of the new development could come forward through the exercise of permitted development rights. In those circumstances, I shall follow the Council's approach and focus on the new first floor rear extension and on the totality of the proposal.

6. The proposed first-floor extension would be set back from a side the rear of the new ground floor projection. The proposed ridge line would be set well below that of the existing dwelling with the eaves and hipped roof would be broadly consistent with the host building. Nevertheless, it would be a sizeable addition with a depth and width that would exceed the maximum thresholds for this type of extension that are set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Extension Guidelines* (SPD). To my mind, the scale of the proposed development, taken overall, could not reasonably be described as a subordinate or proportionate to the dimensions of the main house, which is expected of first floor and 2-storey rear extensions in the SPD.
1. When viewed together, the proposed ground and first floor extension, due to their scale and mass would result in a cumbersome enlargement of the appeal dwelling. That the new side wall at first floor level would be uncomfortably close to the upper rear window of the main house would accentuate the uneasy relationship between the proposal and the existing dwelling. For these reasons, the proposal would distort the proportions of the dwelling and form an unwieldy feature in the new rear façade. Although the new extension would not be visible from the road, it would be readily evident from the back garden of the properties on either side of the site. From these vantage points, the appeal scheme would draw the eye as an incongruous, obtrusive and unwelcome addition to the host building and the local area even when seen among the varied built form at the rear of the terrace to which No 2 belongs.
7. I accept that the removal of the ground floor projections at the back of the house to make way for the new addition would improve the appearance of the main house. I also share the appellant's view that details of the external materials could be covered by a condition if the proposal were otherwise acceptable. This condition would overcome the Council's concern with regard to the proposed use of render, which it considers would jar with the appearance of the existing brick walls to the main house.
8. Nevertheless, I conclude on the first main issue that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. Accordingly, it conflicts with Policies CC1, CC2 and SC7 of the Council's Local Plan 2015-2030 and the advice in its SPD. These policies and guidance aim to ensure that development maintains or enhances the character of the area. It is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.

Living conditions

9. The ground floor addition would be modest in height although it would project beyond the existing rear building line of No 4, which has a full width single storey rear projection. Even so, the views from and natural light to the ground floor rear windows of this adjacent property would be largely unaffected.

10. There would be some loss of light to and outlook from the first-floor rear window of No 4 that is closest to the common boundary with the site due to the depth and position of the new upper extension. However, the proposed first floor extension would be set back from the shared boundary with No 4, albeit not to the full extent that is advised in the Council's SPD. As the back of No 4 broadly faces south and the main direction of view from its rear windows would remain across its long back garden, I doubt that the additional loss of outlook or light to the rear windows would be so great as to be harmful, nor would the proposal feel overbearing or unduly heighten a sense of enclosure.
11. For these reasons, I conclude on the second main issue that the living conditions of the occupiers of No 4 would not be materially reduced. Therefore, I find no conflict with the policies and guidance cited by the Council insofar as they aim to safeguard residential amenity. My finding on this matter does not outweigh the harm that I have identified in relation to the first main issue.

Other matters

12. Once complete, the proposed first floor extension would provide an additional bedroom that would enhance the living conditions of the appellant. It also makes efficient use of the space available within the site. However, these considerations do not outweigh the identified harm.
13. An interested party raises additional concern in relation to the effect of the proposal on privacy and light. These are important considerations and I have taken into account all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings in relation to the first main issue, these are not matters that have been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR