
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2015

by Jonathan Manning BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 17 March 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/14/2222001

42a Wood Lane, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 6EX

- 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 Peter Bennett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 22598/APP/2014/570, dated 18 February 2014, was refused by notice dated 19 May 2014.
 - The development proposed is to redevelop the existing extension into a more purposeful living space. Two storey, two bedroom, one en-suite and bathroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue of the appeal is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on Wood Lane and currently accommodates a two-storey semi-detached house and a detached garage. I understand that the host dwelling was originally one large detached dwelling that has been split to form No 42 and No 42a (the appeal property). The dwelling has a forward facing hipped roof over the two storey element to the east and a single storey entrance connection to a further single storey extension with pyramidal roof design. The appeal site is located within the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. Whilst I observed that there are a mix of dwelling styles and types in the wider area, the immediate area is characterised largely by detached properties, set back from the road with large gardens and planting, with visual gaps between them. I observed that the attractive host property in a 'Olde Worlde' style, retaining many period finishes and features makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
4. The proposal would result in the construction of a two storey side extension adjacent to the existing entrance connection and above/incorporating the current single storey extension. The proposed extension would have a depth of approximately 7.65 metres and a width of approximately 4.75 metres. The maximum ridge height would be approximately 8 metres to match the existing dwelling. The accommodation would include sitting room, kitchen, two bedrooms, en-suite and a bathroom.

5. The Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement: Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2008) (the SPD) at Section 5.0 sets out that the width and height of extensions in relation to the original house should be considerably less than that of the original house and be between half and two thirds of the main house width depending on the plot size and character of the area and the ground and first floor should be set back 1 metre from the main front building line. The guidance also goes on to note that the extended section of the roof should also be set below the existing ridgeline on semi-detached properties. Such measures are to prevent harm to the visual amenity of a site and its wider setting and to ensure that extensions have a subordinate appearance to the host property.
6. It is evident that the proposal being of a similar height and of a comparable width and depth to the host property, which would not be set back from the main front building line, would not comply with this guidance. The proposed extension would result in an overly dominant addition to the host property that would not be subordinate in appearance, causing harm to the character and appearance of the host property.
7. I observed that the proposal due to its significant size and its replicated gable feature would compete with the host dwelling and undermine its special architectural and visual qualities that positively contributes to the street scene and the wider Conservation Area. As a result of this, the proposal would appear as an inappropriate feature within the street scene that would not harmonise with its immediate context and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. I consider that the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole to be less than substantial, therefore the public benefits of the scheme need to be weighed against the identified harm. The proposed development would provide increased living accommodation and I note the aim of the development is to provide living space for the appellant's family. However, in the absence of any more immediate public benefits, I do not consider that this outweighs the identified harm.
8. I accept that the architectural design of the proposed extension would complement the style and form of the host property and changes have been made in the past that have been in keeping with the host property. However, such matters do not overcome my above concerns.
9. In conclusion, the proposal by virtue of its size, scale, bulk and design would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene, and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. The proposal therefore runs contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012) and Policies BE4, BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Saved UDP Policies (2012). The policies seek to ensure that: developments achieve high quality design, which enhances the local distinctiveness of the area; developments in Conservation Areas preserve or enhance those features which contribute to their special architectural and visual qualities; development harmonises with the existing street scene; extensions harmonise with the scale, form and proportions of the host dwelling; and complements the amenity and character of the area. I also consider that the proposal conflicts with the guidance provided within the SPD.

Other matters

10. The Council has raised concern that the proposal by virtue of its layout would be tantamount to a new dwelling that would be unacceptable in this location. The Council has set out that such a development would require full planning consent as opposed to being applied for through a householder application. However, given that I am dismissing the appeal on other grounds, this matter has not had a significant bearing on my decision.
11. I acknowledge that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties. The appellant has suggested that he would consider the removal of the detached garage to free up more space. However, these matters individually or in combination do not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Jonathan Manning

INSPECTOR