

SUBJECT - PLANNING APPEAL – SINGLE STOREY
SIDE/REAR EXTENSION

LOCATION – 3 COPSE WOOD WAY NORTHWOOD HA6
2TP

DECISION REF – 22134/APP/2021/1580

APP/R5510/X/21/3280569

PREPARED BY – MARK REEVES BSc (Hons) MRICS

DATE – 14 NOVEMBER 2021

DOCUMENT REF – MDR/6

RESPONSE TO LBH APPEAL STATEMENT (UNDATED)

I find the response from LBH disingenuous. They infer the onus of proof is the burden of the applicant, which I accept. They confirm that photographs were provided, together with the obvious floor plans and elevations requisite for the CLU application.

Yet they were unable to determine from the photos that the kitchen and first floor dressing room were original 1920 s construction? I would expect a first year planning student to be capable of determining the difference between a 1920 s original build and a 1980 s extension. These are not forensic architectural skills beyond the remit of a planning officer.

If there were some doubt regarding the age of the building components then common sense would dictate that the LBH will seek further clarification from me? But I heard nothing until I received the refusal letter. Perhaps mid application liaison is an inconvenience contrary to LBH policy ?

I also note that there is a claim from LBH that mindful of the 'pandemic' restrictions photographs were relied on rather than site visits? Mercifully the bin men have not used the same excuse to stay in their 'home office' bunkers over the past 18 months. I would like to point out that I have made 6 planning applications in relation to this property in the past year and am yet to be visited by a planning officer ? I am at a loss as to why a visit in the fresh air to my property would place any planning officer at risk ? You are allowed to work even during the small period of lockdown we had. If I had received such a visit the officer would have seen with their own eyes the aged building in which I inhabit. And would have immediately determined it as original 1920 s build.

Furthermore, the LBH has all of the planning history and records pertaining to this site before them, and its not rocket science to look these up ? This would have resulted in a similar conclusion to a site visit ?

Instead the planning officer, concluded in the 'balance of probability', one assumes from a home Covid office bunker, that the entire flank wing of my home to be an extension? I submit that I did all I should do as an applicant to demonstrate the 'original' width of my home.

I would have happily re submitted and waited another 8 weeks, but was told there is no 'free go' and that I must effectively pay again and wait like a good citizen? I am thus having to burden the Planning Inspectorate with this appeal over what I see as a Laissez faire approach to the planning function by the LBH.

