



APPEAL STATEMENT

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AGAINST THE DECISION OF LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON TO REFUSE
PLANNING PERMISSION FOR:

‘Part single, part two storey side/rear extension (following demolition of side
garage); roof alterations to include new crown/pitched roof with two rear dormers
and new front, side, rear windows and rooflights’
(REF: 76019/APP/2021/2705)

AT: 19 HIGHFIELD DRIVE, ICKENHAM, UB10 8AW

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Grounds of Appeal have been submitted in support of an appeal against London Borough of Hillingdon's decision to refuse planning permission for the **'Part single, part two storey side/rear extension (following demolition of side garage); roof alterations to include new crown/pitched roof with two rear dormers and new front, side, rear windows and rooflights'**, at **19 Highfield Drive, Ickenham** (Ref 76019/APP/2021/2705).

1.2 The Council's decision notice cited one reason for refusal, as:

- *The proposed extensions, by reason of their combined siting, design, height, scale and proportions would result in a visually incongruous and dominant dwelling that would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition of the original dwelling, would have an adverse visual relationship with the properties along Highfield Drive, and would therefore harm the visual amenities of the street scene and character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Policies D1 and D4 of the London Plan (2020), Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - 2 Development Management Policies (2020).*
- *The proposed extensions, in particular the excessive rearward projection, by virtue of its siting and scale would give rise to unacceptable loss of outlook, overbearing impact, visual intrusion and sense of enclosure to the occupiers at 21 Highfield Drive, resulting in harm to residential amenity. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020).*

1.3 As is the appellant's prerogative, this appeal is submitted under Section 78 (Section 2) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).

Key Matters

1.4 Within this appeal submission, we will address the reason for refusal and issues raised by the Council in the Officer's report. We identify the following key issues for consideration in this appeal are:

- Whether the proposed extension would cause incongruous and unsympathetic design detrimental to the character and appearance of the property and wider area;
- Whether the proposed extensions would have an unacceptable level of harm to the amenities of 21 Highfield Drive, Ickenham.

2.0 APPEAL SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The appeal site is located on the eastern side of Highfield Drive. The site comprises a detached dwelling constructed of yellow brick and antique brown roof tiles. The dwelling itself is characterised by its front facing dormer windows but does not lend itself to a particular architectural form or period.
- 2.2 Dwellings within the immediate vicinity are varied in their architectural appearance and general vernacular. This is owing to a number of replacement dwellings and remodelling of dwellings through substantial and large extensions. This is reflected in the material palette, roof profiles and general bulk and massing of properties to the south and west of the appeal site.
- 2.3 The alteration and architectural is evident from viewing the appeal dwelling within the context of its neighbouring dwellings and adjacent properties. The variance in general design, roof profile, ridge and eaves heights is readily apparent and its this mix of design that personifies the individuality of each dwelling and establishes the character of the street scene. ***Further reference is made to the character and appearance of the street scene through recent appeal decisions along the road under section 6 of this report.***
- 2.4 It is recognised that dwellings within the vicinity benefit from largely open frontages which are screened by low level fenestration, or vegetation. This is consistent to the rear of the respective sites as well as the appeal site, which benefits from a substantial garden depth which is largely laid to lawn.
- 2.5 The site falls within the developed area as identified in the local development plan. The site is not within a Conservation Area or statutorily or locally listed.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The appeal site benefits from limited relevant planning history. There are a number of recent approvals and appeal decisions within the immediate vicinity which we consider are material to the assessment of this appeal. For the Inspectors ease, these are set out below:
- 11217/APP/2019/4070 - Part two storey, part single storey side/rear extension and raising and enlargement of roof to include 2 front and 2 rear dormers with 1 side roof light to allow for conversion of roof space to habitable use (Approved) – **45 Highfield Drive, Ickenham**
 - 24942/APP/2018/4329 - Part two storey, part single storey side/rear extension, first floor side extension, single storey front extension and conversion of roof space to

habitable use to include 2 rear dormers, 9 roof lights and alterations to roof including raising of ridge height. **(Allowed at appeal APP/R5510/D/19/3224543)- 34 Highfield Drive, Ickenham**

- 22897/APP/2017/1062 - Part first floor and part 2 storey rear extension, two storey front extension, conversion of roofspace to habitable use to include 2 rear dormers, 3 side rooflights and conversion of garage to habitable use involving alterations to front elevation. **(Allowed at appeal APP/R5510/D/17/3178470) – 35 Highfield Drive, Ickenham**

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The appeal proposal seeks planning permission for a part first floor, part two-storey rear extension including a two-storey front extension resulting in a more traditional two-storey dwelling appearance.
- 4.2 The proposal also seeks the alteration of the roof profile to allow for habitable use including rear dormer windows and 3 side rooflights.
- 4.3 The proposal addresses concerns raised by the Council during pre-app discussions and sets in the two-storey side extension from the boundary by 1m, where it was previously sought to mimic that of No.21 and running the extension along the flank boundary.
- 4.4 As part of the proposed design of the dwellings, consideration was given to other forms of development within the area, recent appeal decisions and the consideration of the character of the area.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

- 5.1 The Government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework in 2021. The NPPF which is the overarching planning document in England, continues to seek to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental, and social progress for this and future generations.
- 5.2 The NPPF (2021) attaches importance to the design of the built environment, which is seen as a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning, that should contribute positively to making places better for people.

5.3 Chapter 12 of the NPPF (2021) reiterates that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It then states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments.

- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout, and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).
- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live work and visit.
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Local Planning Policy

5.4 Sitting underneath the NPPF is the London Plan (2021), Development Management Policies Part One (2012) and Part Two (2021), and Supplementary Planning Documents.

London Plan (2021)

- D6 - Housing quality and standards
- SI2 - Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- HC1 - Heritage conservation and growth
- T6 - Car parking

Development Management Policies

- DMHB 11 -Design of New Development
- DMHB 12 – Streets and Public Realm
- DMHB 18 – Private Outdoor Amenity Space
- DMHB 14 – Trees and Landscaping
- DMHD 1 – Alterations and Extensions to Residential Dwellings
- DMT6 – Vehicle Parking
- LPP D4 - Delivering good design
- LPP D3 – Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- LPP D6 – Housing quality and standards

The above documents are, therefore, material considerations in the determination of this appeal.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Reason for Refusal One

Character and Appearance

- 6.1 The Council's first reason for refusal stems around the perceived impact the proposal is considered to have on the host property and the wider area, as a result of its design. The Council's decision notice does not specifically reference one part of the proposal, and as such it is considered appropriate to consider the context of the officer's report.
- 6.2 The officer's report raises two points of concern when considering the design of the extensions, specifically in relation to spacing and the roof profile. The officers comments and assessment are as below:

'Whilst noting that no.21 runs along the boundary of the host site, other large properties within the street do have wider gaps between the boundaries, maintaining more spacious separation distances which in essence helps break up the built form and allows the detached properties to comfortably sit next to each other within the street scene.

'In respect to the proposed height a street scene elevation was requested by officers to see if the dwelling would maintain a comfortable relationship with other the adjacent dwellings and a suitable visual transition from the adjacent bungalow to the two storey dwellings. Whilst it can clearly be seen that the eaves height of the dwelling would be similar to no.21, the overall height of the dwelling would be

higher than no.21 and considerably larger than no.17. This would result in the dwelling appearing overly bulky, large, dominating, incongruous and disproportionate within the street scene and visually overbearing in relation to the bungalow.

In combination with the excessive height the extensions would involve a large, tall and bulky crown roof. This roof form would appear disproportionate and top heavy on the subject dwelling, and visually incongruous with the other dwellings within the street.'

6.3 In the first instance it is considered of value to contribute previous Inspector's comments as well as their assessment of the street scene when considering development within Highfield Drive. For the Inspectors ease, these decisions are set out in the supporting appendices.

6.4 In the assessment of the proposed extensions at 32 Highfield Drive under appeal reference APP/R5510/D/19/3224543 (Appendix A), the Inspector assessed the street scene in the following way:

'No. 32 Highfield Drive is a detached two storey dwelling. The street is characterised by a broad range of detached dwellings, a number of which appear to have been recently enlarged or re-developed. Whilst there is a generally consistent building line fronting towards the street, the prevailing character is one of variety, with a number of differentiations in form, massing, materials and overall appearance.

Whilst I agree with the Council that the proposal would fail to harmonise with the architectural composition of the original dwelling, as it would involve a significant increase in massing and alter the overall appearance of the property, such a design would not be out of place in the context of the prevailing character I have described. The proposal would be consistent with the build line of adjacent properties and the massing would align with other buildings along the street. I noted during my site visit a number of examples of projecting gables to front elevations and a common horizontal emphasis to window detailing, which would be representative components of the appeal proposal.'

6.5 The Inspectors comments are consistent with the appellants view of the immediate vicinity in that the character of the area is varied, with a number of differentiations in the form, massing and appearance of dwellings.

Roof Alterations

6.6 The delegated report has raised concerns that the proposed roof form would sit higher than the neighbouring dwelling No.21, and by virtue of a crown roof be bulky and excessive.

- 6.7 Whilst the appellant acknowledges that the resultant dwelling would be bulkier than the existing property, the design of the dwelling has sought to take its derivative from the context of the street scene. It is considered that the increase in the proportions of the dwelling would be in line with the variety of design that has been identified within appeal decisions in the area.
- 6.8 The proposed crown roof has been sensitively designed to ensure that it maintains a reasonable degree of pitch on all four sides maintaining the appearance of a traditional hipped roof profile. The crown aspect of the roof would not appear visually obtrusive, bulky or top heavy as a result of its proportions to the dwelling as a whole.
- 6.9 Similarly, its ridge height sitting marginally higher than the ridge of No.21 is not a reason within itself to resist the development. In fact, this needs to be considered in context of the street scene where dwelling ridges and heights are not symmetrical or harmonious often altering dwelling to dwelling. This variance in design is part of the character and make up of the street scene and the dwellings would sit comfortably between its respective neighbours to a degree it would not appear out of context, or awkwardly proportioned.
- 6.10 In support of the proposal and the failure of the Council to adequately consider or give appropriate weighting to appeal decisions within the road for crown roofs, the Inspector's comments relating to the recently constructed extensions at 35 Highfield Drive, Ickenham (Appendix C) are set out below:

'The inclusion of a part crown roof would differ to the existing building with its pitched roof and hipped ends. Nevertheless, the flat roof element would not be visible from ground level given the upward angle of view. From Highfield Road and the rear of the site, the hipped roof slopes would be evident and the overall roof form would be in proportion and in keeping with the style of the completed dwelling. Given the wide variety in roof styles of properties in the vicinity of the site, which include gable, crown and hipped roofs, this element of the proposal would not draw the eye because it would not look out of place.'

- 6.11 It is evident that in light of the proposed design of the roof profile, and earlier appeal decisions at the site that crown designs where sensitively and appropriately designed can integrate into the established character of the area. Furthermore, alterations to the roof profile by virtue of height and mass have previously been identified as being a part of the development blueprint of the road which has seen a number of alterations and updated properties along the road. The roof alterations would not go against the grain of development or character of the area as identified and on balance are considered to comply with the policies contained within the development plan.

Visual Gaps

- 6.12 Within the officers delegated report concern is raised as to the gap between the flank wall of the extension and its respective boundary. Reference is made by the officer that more spacious separation distances exist within the vicinity which help break up the built form, allowing properties to comfortably sit next to each other in the street scene.
- 6.13 In the first instance No.21 is set up against the boundary of its northern flank boundary. The absence of any visual gaps is noticeable as the property spans width to width across the extent of the plot. The proposed extensions, the subject of this appeal, offer a 1m gap to the respective boundary. In maintaining this the applicant had regard to the Inspectors comments under appeal reference APP/R5510/D/19/3224543.
- 6.14 The Inspector commented that ***'I also noted that in a number of circumstances buildings along the street are sited in close proximity to their side boundaries with flank two storey elevations. The appeal proposal would follow the proximity of the existing building to the side boundaries. Whilst it would increase in height from single storey to two storey, this would follow the scale and siting of the neighbouring properties on either side. I therefore consider that the resultant increase would not have a significant effect on the perception of the already limited visual gap between the appeal site and its neighbours.'***
- 6.15 The maintained gap of 1m would meet the requirements of the design guidance set within the policy DMHD 1, maintaining a minimum of 1m. The separation of a metre between the flank wall of the proposed two-storey side extension with its respective southern boundary would maintain appropriate separation distances akin to other properties within the area.
- 6.16 In maintaining this visual gap, the extensions would be allowed to sit well within the plot and not appear cramped or visually forced into the space when compared to No.21. Similarly, the proposals would maintain a clear visual gap towards the rear of the site which would ensure the extensions would not visually coalesce with the neighbouring dwellings thereby affording views toward the rear gardens within this suburban location.

Front gable

- 6.17 The delegated report also references the proposed front gable, albeit in a limited capacity. Concern was highlighted as to its impact on the property owing to its overall size, scale and appearance.

- 6.18 The proposed gable has been designed to introduce an architectural feature that not only complements the appearance of the building, but visually breaks up an otherwise flat frontage.
- 6.19 The gable feature is located to the southern side of the dwelling and is not a central feature that would draw the eye or detract from the main character of the building. Its overall size, scale and set down from the main ridge would allow it to appear subordinate in scale to the general width and scale of the dwelling. Its absence from the design would appear more harmful to the architectural composition of the dwelling and would be more likely to impact the character of the street scene.
- 6.20 As such, the proposed gable profile is considered to represent an entirely appropriate form of development that would not conflict with the varied character and appearance of dwellings within the vicinity. Its design and scale would enhance the character of the dwelling which currently has limited architectural value or merit.

Reason for Refusal Two

- 6.21 The Council's second reason for refusal stems around the perceived impact the proposed side/rear extensions would have on the amenities of No.21 Highfield Drive.
- 6.22 The delegated report sets out that the Council consider the depth of the rear extension would impact the amenities of No.21 Highfield Drive by creating a sense of overbearing impact, loss of outlook, sense of enclosure, overdominance and visual impact.
- 6.23 The appellant considers this to be a misleading statement and one that does not truly consider the relationship between the two dwellings. The proposed first floor aspect of the extension would extent approx. 1.8m beyond the rear wall of the neighbouring property nearest the common boundary of the two properties. The extension would be sited over 1m from the shared boundary, and nearly 3m from the nearest habitable window of No.21 and this separation distance would seek to ensure the proposal would not appear overbearing or visually dominant when viewed from the habitable windows of this dwelling.
- 6.24 Further to this, the dwellings and their respective plots are largely linear. This results in the rear windows of the dwellings facing their own respective gardens. The modest projection of the extensions beyond the rear wall of No.21 would not impinge or visually crowd any views from the ground floor and first floor windows of this property. Their visual outlook from all of the habitable windows nearest No.19 Highfield Drive would be consistently towards their own amenity space, and any extent of extension which would be noticeable would only be from oblique angles and views owing to the separation distances and modest projections discussed.

- 6.25 A further detailed assessment of the neighbouring dwellings private amenity space demonstrates that their garden furniture, bbq and most commonly used space is located adjacent a single storey rear projection. This projection is located centrally within the plot, some 10m away from the proposed extensions. The degree of separation between the extensions, neighbouring dwellings amenity space and the pitched roof of the dwelling would ensure that the extensions are not visually overbearing or detrimental to No.21s amenity as suggested.
- 6.26 It is evident that the council have not visited site as their assessment was based wholly on-site photos provided by the applicant and planning agent. Had the planning officer adequately considered the site specifics then the degree of harm would have been established as not being as great as the council have sought to emphasise. In addition, both neighbouring properties were supportive of the extensions and offered representations to this extent.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that the appellant has worked proactively to deliver a scheme that satisfactorily harmonises within the immediate setting and wider street scene.
- 7.2 It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the Council have considered the impact of the proposal on a technical basis, and not site specifics. The proposal has given significant weight and consideration to other similar forms of development within the area as well as the context of a number of appeal decisions (appendices). On balance, the proposal would ensure the development successfully harmonises with the character of this developed and varied street scene.
- 7.3 Overall, the proposal satisfies the context of the NPPF, the London Plan, Development Management Policies and supporting Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 7.4 In light of the above, we respectfully request the Inspector allows the appeal, subject to any planning conditions they considered appropriate to the development.

