



Appeal Statement

Householder Extensions
AT
41 Highfield Drive,
Ickenham UB10 8AW

Reference: 41HD-2028

Date: 6 September 2022

1. Introduction

- a. This Appeal Statement has been prepared by Just Planning on behalf of Mr G Madhan to support an appeal against the decision of London Borough of Hillingdon to refuse an application to extend a house at 41 Highfield Drive, in Ickenham.
- b. The planning application was accompanied by a detailed Planning, Design & Access Statement, prepared by Just Planning (reference: 41HD-1941, dated: 28 April 2022). It describes the site and surrounding area, sets out the planning history, reviews relevant planning policies and outlines the case for the appellant.
- c. This Appeal Statement does not repeat the contents of the Planning Statement but responds directly to the council's reasons for refusal and the case officer's assessment as set out in the officer's report.

2. Background

- a. On 9 May 2022, the appellant submitted an application to the London Borough of Hillingdon for the following proposal (reference: 30871/APP/2022/1516):

Single storey rear extension, a first floor rear extension infilling the area to the side of the existing first floor rear addition, a roof extension with two rear dormers to provide additional second floor living accommodation and a two storey front extension.

- b. On 9 August 2022, the council refused planning permission for the following reasons:

1. *The proposed development by reason of its size, siting, scale, mass, bulk and design would result in an incongruous and overly dominant form of development which fails to respect the design of the original house, or read as subordinate to and relate to the established site context. The proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance to the host dwelling, streetscene and surrounding area and would therefore be contrary to Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012), Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies, Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*
2. *The proposal by reason of its size, siting, scale, mass, bulk and design would be detrimental to the residential amenity of No. 43 Highfield Drive in terms of overdominance, outlook, sense of enclosure, visual intrusion, some loss of daylight/sunlight, and overbearing impact. Therefore, the proposal would fail to comply with the requirements of Policies DMHD 1 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*

3. Case for the Appellant

- a. The council does not object in principle to the extension of this dwelling to provide the appellant and his family with enlarged and enhanced living accommodation. It is concerned that the development will harm the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area, and that the development will unacceptably harm living conditions at the neighbouring property, number 43 Highfield Drive.
- b. Policies BE1 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan seek a high quality of design in all new development and policy DMHD 1 provides more detailed guidance on different types of householder extension.
- c. The officer's report argues that the extensions to the rear result in a cumulative projection of 7m beyond the original rear wall of the house and that such a projection is "*wholly excessive*". However, the proposal increases the depth of the existing first floor extension only moderately and adds an additional single-storey rear extension that is modest in height and depth and subordinate to the main part of the house.
- d. The extensions are not excessive in depth when considered in the context of surrounding development. The extended house will be less deep than its next door neighbour (number 39) at first floor, and only moderately deeper at ground floor level.
- e. As the Planning Statement submitted with the application explains in some detail, there is a pronounced diversity in the streetscene in this area and most of the houses have been substantially extended or replaced. As a result, deeper (and larger) houses are a strongly established feature of the street and the rear extensions will not be out of place in this context.
- f. The officer's report argues that the original house would be 'overwhelmed' and that the extensions would not be subservient. However, the appeal proposal is for a more comprehensive redesign of the house. The question is whether the outcome is a balanced and proportionate presence on the street. The house will be no wider than existing and only moderately taller. It respects the building line. Its new front projection differs from the existing (original) projection but is of an enhanced design. The overall design will sit comfortably on a street characterised by large, detached houses in a wide variety of architectural designs.

- g. The case officer objects to a rise in the eaves height, but this accords with a similar eaves height at number 39, next door. The increased ridge height is very limited and will not be discernible. The submitted front elevation and streetscene drawings show the front elevation, with its adjusted roof height, will have a coherent, balanced appearance and will fit in with the neighbours to either side.
- h. The case officer suggests that this drawing is inaccurate, but the architect has checked it against the measured site survey carried out before the plans were drawn and confirms that it does accurately show the relative heights, taking account of ground levels.
- i. The case officer alleges unacceptable harm to the original 'architectural composition' of the house. However, this house is of no particular architectural merit. It has plain elevations with an oddly shallow, offset front projection. It makes a neutral contribution to the streetscene. The case officer is correct that the roof redesign and new front gable alter this original design, but the appellant considers that the result represents an enhancement, rather than a deterioration, in the building's character.
- j. The council is concerned that the roof will be bulky. Policy DMHD 1 states that crown roofs will rarely be found acceptable. However, they have been found acceptable, on several occasions, along this street.
- k. The crown roof will not be readily visible. The height of the building and the close proximity of neighbours will help conceal it, as will the front and side roof pitches. Insofar as it is visible, it will not look out of place in the context of similar roofs nearby. The next door neighbour at number 39 has a crown roof, as do houses at numbers 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 48 Highfield Drive. Number 40 is a good example of a redeveloped house on a larger scale with a crown roof as large as, if not larger than, the appeal proposal. It is an example of how a development of this kind can integrate comfortably with the Highfield Drive streetscene.
- l. In the appeal decision allowing the redevelopment number 36, the inspector commented on a proposed (fairly substantial) crown roof, arguing that it would be concealed by existing buildings and vegetation. Full details of this appeal are provided in the Planning, Design & Access Statement.

- m. The second reason for refusal relates to a possible impact on living conditions at number 43 Highfield Drive, the neighbour to the south. There is no suggestion of harm to the other neighbour, number 39.
- n. Although the reason for refusal on the decision notice alleges a loss of sunlight and daylight affecting number 43, no such argument is made in the case officer's assessment in the officer's report, which refers only to an *"overbearing nature, loss of outlook, sense of enclosure, overdominance and a visual impact"*.
- o. The neighbour at number 43 sits to the south of the appeal property. Since the sun moves through the sky on a southerly axis, the neighbour's garden and rear windows will not be overshadowed by the proposed extensions and that there will be no harmful loss of light.
- p. It remains to be considered whether the extensions will be unacceptably overbearing, creating a harmful sense of enclosure. In a built up area, residents will have a reasonable expectation that they will be conscious of the presence of neighbouring built form. Being able to see a neighbour's extension does not mean it will necessarily have an oppressive visual impact. In this case, the neighbour has a substantial property on a wide and deep plot. The new extensions are only moderately deeper than the existing rear projection at first floor level and this additional depth will not have a materially harmful impact on number 43.
- q. The ground floor projection is deeper than the first floor, but it is single-storey only and modest in height. It is set away from the nearest part of the neighbour's property and their rear-facing windows. Finally, as explained in the Planning Statement, there is tall, dense, mature planting along the shared boundary that protects the neighbour from an overbearing impact.

4. Conclusions

- a. In the appellant's view, the council has applied its policy requirements for householder extensions (set out in policy DMHD 1) without taking sufficient account of the site context. A large number of the houses on this street have been extended, reconfigured or demolished and rebuilt. The streetscene is varied and larger houses with rear extensions, front gable projections and crown roofs are established features.
- b. As the neighbour at number 43 lies to the south, there is no harmful loss of light. The rear extension is primarily at ground floor level and will not be tall or deep enough to have a materially overbearing impact, especially given the tall planting along the boundary.
- c. For the above reasons, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the relevant development plan and national policies and the inspector is therefore respectfully requested to allow this appeal.



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