
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2025

by **C Rafferty LLB(Hons), Solicitor**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/24/3347140

18 Ivy House Road, Hillingdon, Ickenham UB10 8NE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Sakaria against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 12529/APP/2024/682.
 - The development proposed is Installation of insulating render to the external walls with amendments to fenestration (partially retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the appeal form and decision notice, as this more accurately represents the proposal than the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including whether it would preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the Ickenham Village Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached dwelling on Ivy House Road in the CA, the immediate surrounds of which are residential. A range of dwellings exist on the street of various colours but, despite later additions and alterations, there remains an overall consistency in the somewhat traditional form and appearance of houses.
5. Numerous examples of semi-detached dwellings of the same form as the appeal property and its attached neighbour at No. 16 are present on the street. The external appearance within each of these pairs is largely symmetrical and sympathetic to the appearance of the CA, particularly with regard to the fenestration and pebbledash finishes. This lends a pleasing appearance to Ivy House Road and contributes positively to the immediate section of the CA.
6. The proposal is partially retrospective and, during my visit, I observed the frontage of the appeal property to have been finished in a smooth, cream render, with black framed fenestration. Among the range of dwelling colours on Ivy House Road, the cream finish of the appeal property does not, in itself, cause undue visual harm.

7. However, the render is notably smoother than the pebbledash prevalent within the street, particularly among the semi-detached dwellings with the same form as the appeal property. Although its external projection is modest, its muted texture is notable immediately adjacent to the pebbledash of No. 16. It serves to distinguish the appeal property from its attached neighbour, diluting the symmetry of the dwellings and differentiating the pair from other semi-detached properties of the same design and form. This is furthered by the use of black framed fenestration at the site, which is not a common or defining feature of this part of Ivy House Road. It appears out of place among the predominance of white fenestration in the immediate surrounds, including at No. 16. Taken together, these elements result in the proposal reading as visually jarring in the surrounding context.
8. The combination of the smooth render and black framed fenestration lends the appeal property a notable, contemporary appearance that appears incongruous in this location. Despite the maintenance of the joinery details and dimensions of the property, it results in the dwelling reading as a stark feature in the streetscene, at odds with the character of this part of Ivy House Road, and reducing the somewhat traditional feel of this part of the CA. Due to the open frontage of the site, this failure of the property to successfully assimilate is readily experienced in the surrounds.
9. The appellants have provided evidence on the range of dwellings in the immediate and wider area. However, while other semi-detached pairs are not identical, and examples of dark window frames, smooth render, and cladding are present elsewhere, the proposed combination of dark window frames and smooth render is not prevalent in the surrounds, and causes visual harm in the precise location of the site for the reasons outlined.
10. For these reasons, the proposal would cause visual harm to the site and the contribution it makes to the surrounding character and appearance. As such, it would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Its effect would be localised such that it would be 'less than substantial' harm. Nevertheless, the Framework makes it clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets.
11. The Framework specifies that where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. In this regard I note that the proposed render would have insulating and sustainability benefits. The appellant's also care for an elderly parent with health difficulties, and the proposal would provide improved accommodation in this regard. However, even when taken together these benefits would not outweigh the harm identified to the heritage asset.
12. For the reasons given, the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, and would fail to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the CA. As such, it would fail to comply with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies November 2012; Policies DMHB1, DMHB4, and DMHB11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies January 2020, Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as they seek to ensure high quality design that is appropriate to and harmonises with the local context and avoids harm to the historic environment.

Other Matters

13. I note the concerns of the appellant regarding the cost of reinstating the property in the event that the appeal is dismissed, and the potential effects of such work on the structure and stability of the dwelling. I further acknowledge the issues raised regarding the perceived conduct of the Council. Nevertheless, this does not alter my findings above on the planning merits of the case.
14. In considering this appeal I have also had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010, in particular the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those with protected characteristics and others. Following careful consideration of these particular matters I am satisfied that the impact of dismissing this appeal is proportionate and justified.

Conclusion

15. The proposal would not accord with the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

C Rafferty

INSPECTOR