
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 March 2018

by Graham M Garnham BA BPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Tuesday, 20 March 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/17/3191314
205 Harefield Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1PP

- 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 PGI Development (Harefields) Limited against the decision of London Borough of Hillingdon Council.
 - The application Ref 12886/APP/2017/1478, dated 25 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 31 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is 2 storey side and rear extension with new bay and roof modifications.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I also carried out a site visit at no.207 next door, which is the subject of a separate decision, Ref APP/R5510/D/17/3191318. I have followed the Council in considering each case on its own planning merits.

Main Issues

3. I consider that these are the effects of the proposal on firstly, the character and appearance of the building and the streetscene; secondly, the living conditions of the occupiers of no.207 Harefield Road, with respect to overdominance, overshadowing, visual intrusion, loss of light and loss of outlook; and thirdly, the presence of trees on the site.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 4 bedroom detached house with an attached double garage. It occupies a long plot that slopes down from the road, with several mature trees to the rear. The 2 storey side extension would replace the garage. At the rear the extension would be built across the full width of the enlarged house, projecting 3.5 metres on the ground floor and 2.6 metres at first floor level. The front garden would be re-organised to accommodate enough parking for what would remain a 4 bedroom house.

First main issue – effect on character and appearance

5. The extensions would be “in line”, following the eaves and ridge of the existing roof. The width of built development at ground floor level would not increase. I estimate that, at first floor level, the side extension would amount to less

than half the width of the existing house. It would have a front projection of a design to match that already in place, but of significantly less projection and mass. The first floor rear extension, which necessitates the crown roof, would also be a relatively modest addition to the depth of the house, especially having regard to the depth of the existing front projection. It is proposed to maintain the pitch of the existing roof. So long as the new roof slopes are constructed with tiles to match the existing roof, I consider that the roof would not appear to be unduly bulky or intrusive. A planning condition could achieve this outcome, and the use of matching finishes and fenestration elsewhere on the building. On this basis, I consider that the proposal would be a proportionate addition, reflecting the design, character and appearance of the original house.

6. The proposal would result in both sides of the house at first floor level being quite close to the site boundaries. The existing visual gap over the garage would be lost, although no.207 is set further from the common boundary, maintaining a reasonable space between the houses. In reality, I consider that the gap over the garage at no.205 has a limited role to play in the street scene, which on this side of Harefield Road is characterised by large houses occupying much of the width of their plots. I find that the alterations to the house would not detract materially from the local street scene.
7. I conclude that the proposed building works would not give rise to significant harm to the character and appearance of the building and the streetscene. In this respect it would comply with the development plan policies cited by the Council. These include Policy BE1 in the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012), and Policies BE13, BE15 & BE19 in the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan [UDP] (1998). Among other things, these policies require high standards of design that are appropriate to context, and which harmonise with the streetscene, the design characteristics of the original building and the character of the area. The Council has also cited its Hillingdon Design and Accessibility (HDAS) Supplementary Planning Document on *Residential Extensions* (2008), but has not referred to any specific provisions in it. I have not identified any guidance therein that would warrant withholding planning permission with regard to this main issue.

Second main issue – effect on living conditions

8. The rear and side walls of no.207 Harefield Road lie to the north and northeast of the proposed extensions at no.205. Despite this orientation, the appellant's specialist Daylight & Sunlight Report shows that all main windows would retain good amounts of daylight, and sunlight would be at more than recommended minimum levels. Hence the BRE guidance in these respects would be met.
9. The side extension would however bring the first floor and roof on the appeal site much closer to the side and rear of no.207, and much of the new first floor would project beyond the rear of the existing conservatory. I consider that the effect on outlook, and the appearance of intrusion and dominance, would not be mitigated by no.207 being built on slightly higher ground.
10. The occupier of no.203a Harefield Road, to the south of the appeal site, has also raised concerns about overlooking and deterioration in outlook. An existing raised rear terrace at the appeal site provides some overlooking towards the side wall of no.203a. However, the openings here appear to be of a secondary nature. The main part of no.203a, and all its principal openings

towards the rear, would remain well behind the proposed rear extension, and outlook from them would not be affected. No new side windows are proposed at first floor level. Consequently I find that the relatively modest amount of rear extension that is proposed would not materially harm the living conditions of the occupiers of no.203a.

11. Notwithstanding this finding, I conclude that the proposal would significantly detract from the living conditions of the occupiers of no.207 Harefield Road, with respect to overdominance, visual intrusion, and loss of outlook. There would be conflict with UDP Policy BE19, as the proposal would neither complement nor improve the amenity of the area. However as Policy BE20 is confined to the need for adequate daylight and sunlight, and Policy BE22 on sideward spacing is concerned to protect character and appearance, I find that neither of these policies would be transgressed. Again, no specific provisions in the HDAS have been mentioned, and I am not persuaded that the purposes of this document would be prejudiced by the effect of the proposal on living conditions.

Third main issue – effect on tree cover

12. The appellant has provided an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which identifies trees on and adjoining the site, and the effect of the proposal on them. This report shows that three large trees at the rear would need to be removed to enable the development to take place. This is regrettable, but measures are put forward to protect another nearby tree while several mature trees will remain in the back garden. Consequently I consider that the overall quality and character of the area behind the houses would be maintained.
13. The report also shows that a yew and a number of other trees would be removed at the front of the property and in the adjoining front garden (no.207, also owned by the appellant). This allows the creation of additional parking spaces and a new pedestrian entrance to the site. Although these trees are of lesser size than those affected at the rear, I consider that, together with associated shrubs, they make an important contribution to the appearance of the local street scene. Additional planting is shown in a generalised way, but no specific planting proposals have been included or suggested by way of a planning condition. I consider that new planting would be needed to compensate for this loss of amenity value at the front of the house.
14. I conclude that the proposal would have a significantly detrimental effect on the presence of trees on the front of the site. It would thus fail to complement or improve the amenity and character of the area, and would not retain landscape features of merit or provide new planting where appropriate. In these ways it would be contrary to UDP Policies BE19 & BE38.

Overall conclusion

15. Although I have found in favour of the proposal with respect to the first main issue, I consider that this advantage would be outweighed by significant shortcomings with respect to the other main issues. Overall and on balance, planning permission should therefore be withheld, and I dismiss the appeal.

G Garnham

INSPECTOR