



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2023

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th December 2023

APP/R5510/D/23/3326611

20 Westbourne Close, Hayes, Hillingdon, UB4 9AW

- 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 Mr Grewal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 17136/APP/2023/965, dated 31 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion including front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion including front dormer at 20 Westbourne Close, Hayes, Hillingdon, UB4 9AW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17136/APP/2023/965, dated 31 March 2023, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan; 2023/105/03 and 2023/105/05.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a single storey bungalow in a cul-de-sac. Houses are generally grouped in small terraces of 3 or 4 houses constructed of yellow stock brick. Designs are similar with a simple façade. Most have wide sliding doors on the front elevation opening on to a recessed porch area, although some including the appeal property have porch extensions projecting to the front of the house. Gardens or paved drives meet the pavement edge without any front boundary walls. 9 out of the 17 houses within the cul-de-sac have front dormers, as do a semi-detached pair of bungalows on the entrance to the road

on the junction of Westbourne Close and Masefield Lane. Consequently, although there are no front dormers within the terrace of 4 houses of which the appeal site is part, they are visible from all angles within the Close. Along with the other common elements I have described they are a key feature of the street scene and thus contribute to its character and appearance.

4. Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) (DMP) only permits rear dormers. However, the proposed front dormer would be of a similar scale and position within the roof plane as other dormers within the Close. I note that planning permission for them predated Policy DMHD1 and appreciate that front dormers can often appear out of place and overly dominant. However, in this case, given that they are a key feature contributing to the character and appearance of at least half the houses within the close, the proposed development would not appear intrusive or out of keeping, nor would it harm the appearance of the host property or wider street scene. It would therefore comply with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012) and Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the DMP which require extensions to enhance local distinctiveness and integrate well with the surrounding area. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would conform with the development plan taken as a whole.

Other matters

5. A representation raised concerns regarding overlooking and parking. The appeal property's windows already face towards the front windows of houses on the opposite side of the road. The additional dormer windows would not therefore increase the potential for overlooking beyond that which already exists. The proposed development would increase headroom within the existing bedrooms and not lead to any additional demand for parking.

Conditions

6. In addition to the standard condition which limits the lifespan of the planning permission I have specified the approved plans to provide certainty and imposed a condition regarding materials to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR