



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 August 2023

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/23/3321225

15 Church Avenue, Ruislip, Hillingdon HA4 7HX

- 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 Steve Curteis against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 26493/APP/2023/43, dated 6 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension, a first floor side and rear extension, a single storey rear extension, a front porch extension and changes to the roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear extension, a first floor side and rear extension, a single storey rear extension, a front porch extension and changes to the roof at 15 Church Avenue, Ruislip, Hillingdon HA4 7HX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 26493/APP/2023/43, dated 6 January 2023, 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: 2022-036/116, 2022-036/200, 2022-036/216, 2022-036/115, 2022-036/211, 2022-036/210, 2022-036/111, 2022-036/212, 2022-036/215, 2022-036/099, 2022-036/113, 2022-036/110, 2022-036/213, 2022-036/100, 2022-036/098 and 2022-036/112.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out fully in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan by Trevor Heaps Arboricultural Consultancy Limited.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The site falls within the Ruislip Village Conservation Area ('the RVCA'). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that, in respect of development affecting conservation areas, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing their character or appearance.
4. The National Planning Policy Framework ('Framework') sets out that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, such as conservation areas, and that harm to their significance requires clear and convincing justification.
5. Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One: Strategic Policies (2012) ('HLPP1') seeks to conserve and enhance Hillingdon's environment, including its designated heritage assets. Policies DMHB 1 and DMHB 4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two: Development Management Policies (2020) ('HLPP2'), and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 ('LP') require development to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets, and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.
6. As set out in the Ruislip Village Conservation Area Appraisal 2010, the RVCA was developed in the garden suburb style, and has a spacious, leafy character. Church Avenue is described as containing some of the best quality housing in the area. I observed that the houses here, and on King Edwards Road adjacent, are substantial in scale, and are laid out on well-landscaped, spacious plots. Many have an individual appearance, which includes attractive architectural detailing, such as decorative timbers and white rendered panels, intricate tilework, overhanging eaves, and prominent chimney stacks.
7. In comparison, the host, which I understand has been substantially altered and extended, has a rather plainer appearance and, in contrast to the well-articulated design of many of its neighbours, with its large crown roofs it has a somewhat rectilinear and truncated form.
8. The proposed extensions would significantly alter the appearance of the existing building and would give it a greater scale and bulk. However, as demonstrated by drawing no. 2022-036/212, the highest point of its raised roof would be no taller than its neighbour at 13 Church Avenue ('No 13'), and its long ridgeline parallel to the road would be lower.
9. Moreover, whilst the Council is concerned that the long catslide roof would be a bulky addition, it would broadly reflect the appearance of some nearby dwellings, including 14 and 21 Church Avenue, as demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement. In comparison to the existing building, the resultant dwelling would have more balanced and articulated proportions, and it would better reflect the Arts and Crafts style of some houses nearby.
10. The scheme would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the RVCA, and it would not conflict with HLPP1 Policy HE1, HLPP2 Policies DMHB 1 and DMHB 4, or LP Policy HC1. Having regard to Framework paragraph 202, as the significance of this designated heritage asset would be preserved, there is no requirement for me to weigh harm against any public benefits of the proposal.

11. Additionally, given my findings above, the proposal would not conflict with the more general stance in HLPP1 Policy BE1, LP Policy D3, and HLPP2 Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 12, for high quality design, which harmonises with its context, taking account of matters such as scale, shape, height, form, the mass and bulk of adjacent structures, streetscape, and materials.
12. As the proposal would not be subordinate to the main dwelling, there would be a limited conflict with HLPP2 Policy DMHD 1, but not with its stance that extensions should not have an adverse impact on the character, appearance and quality of the area. I therefore conclude on this issue that the scheme would comply with the development plan when considered as a whole.

Other matters

13. I have limited information regarding alleged discrepancies or errors in the depicted position of a boundary wall. However, I have dealt with the proposal before me on its planning merits, and this would normally be addressed under separate legal rights, and party wall matters by other legislation.
14. The white painted render finish on the upper floor facing No 13, as depicted on drawing no. 2022-036/213, would assist in providing reflective light to the occupiers of that property.

Conditions and Conclusion

15. Turning to the matter of conditions, I have imposed the standard time limit condition, and, in the interests of certainty, a condition requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
16. Having regard to the Framework's tests, in the interests of the character and appearance of the area, a condition is necessary requiring that the extensions be faced in matching materials. Finally, having regard to the Council's delegated report, and for the same reason, a condition is also necessary requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.
17. Summing up, subject to the above conditions, the scheme would preserve the character and appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. Consequently, having regard to all other matters raised, including representations by interested parties, the appeal is allowed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR