
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2023

by A Caines BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/22/3311275

322 Balmoral Drive, Hayes, Hillingdon UB4 8DJ

- 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 N Ahmed against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 32141/APP/2022/2708, dated 30 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is conversion of garage into a habitable room, ground floor rear extension, and first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the time of my site visit some works had already been undertaken to the garage, but not entirely as shown on the application drawings. Therefore, for the avoidance of any doubt, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the submitted drawings.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is one half of a two-storey, semi-detached house located prominently at the corner of Balmoral Drive with Mansfield Drive in an established residential area of similar properties. In common with other corner properties in the area, it has a single-storey garage extension at the side. However, the wide space above the extension retains an appreciable sense of openness at the entrance to Mansfield Drive and contributes to the general order and spatial quality of the street scene in this location.
5. The proposal includes extensions above and to the rear of the existing garage. The first floor element would be narrower in width than the ground floor and would be set back from the front elevation with a corresponding lower ridge height. This would give some impression of subservience to the host building when viewed directly from the front.
6. However, it would still be an extension of significant size in relation to the original building. This would be particularly evident when viewed from the side where the length and height of the flank elevation would have considerable

bulk and massing in close proximity to the side boundary, notwithstanding the stepped-in design. The result would be an unduly dominant addition that fails to respect the form and proportions of the host building. Furthermore, whilst I do not share the Council's concerns in relation to the effect on the return building lines along Mansfield Drive, the height and bulk of the extensions would result in a street scene that is materially more enclosed at this corner junction, to the detriment of the spatial quality of the area. The overall effect would be a design and scale of development that does not integrate sensitively with the host building and its immediate surroundings.

7. The appellant states that there are many similar examples in the area, but no details are given. At my site visit I did not observe any comparable examples in the immediate vicinity. In any event, the presence of other apparently similar development in the area is not a good reason, on its own, to allow harmful development at the appeal site.
8. I therefore conclude that the development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host building and its immediate surroundings. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies DMHB11 and DMHD1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020), which among other things, require that new development, including extensions, harmonises with the local context; respects the design and architectural composition of the original building; and ensures that there is no adverse cumulative impact on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area.

Other Matters

9. The Council did not raise any concerns in relation to neighbouring properties or parking provision. I also recognise that the additional living accommodation created would be of benefit to the occupants of the appeal property. Nonetheless, this is not justification for the harm I have identified and the resultant conflict that arises with the development plan as a whole.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR