The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2015

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 28 March 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/14/3001666
37 Ramulis Drive, Yeading, Hayes, Middlesex, UB4 9PZ

- 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 Mrs Deborah Latouche against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- The application Ref 70313/APP/2014/3401, dated 8 October 2014, was refused by notice dated 10 December 2014.
- The development proposed is the erection of a single-storey rear extension and conversion of roof space to habitable use to include a rear dormer and 1 front rooflight.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed extensions on:

   - The character and appearance of the area around Ramulis Drive and Lochan Close, and
   - The living conditions of the occupiers of No 37 Ramulis Drive by way of private amenity space.

Reasons

3. No 37 Ramulis Drive is a small mid-terraced house with a long, narrow rear garden that backs onto Lochan Close. The proposed development would involve the construction of a full-width, single-storey rear extension some 3 metres deep, and a full-width rear dormer within the roof space to create an additional bedroom with en-suite bathroom.

4. The Council has a Supplementary Planning Document on Residential Extensions (SPD). This indicates that roof extensions should appear as secondary to the roof face within which it will be set. Moreover, it states that roof extensions that would be as wide as the house and create the appearance of an effective flat roofed third storey will be refused permission. Finally, it goes on to state that as a guide, any roof extension to a terraced house should be set at least 0.3m (30cm) below the ridge level, at least 0.5m (50cm) above the eaves level and at least 0.5m (50cm) from the sides of the roof.

5. In the case of the proposed dormer, it would appear to conform to the height requirements, but it would occupy the full width of the house and this would result in it dominating the rear roof face. It would not appear as secondary and it would not conform to the guidelines on set in of roof extensions from the sides of the roof. The dormer would be visible from Lochan Close immediately to the rear and, by virtue of its scale, it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The appellant contends that other houses in the vicinity also have dormer extensions. There would appear to be very few such examples in the surrounding area and those that do exist, for example on Lochan Close and Lanata Walk, have dormers that are set in from the sides of the roof and that appear to conform to guidelines as laid down in the SPD.

7. The appellant also notes that the additional bedroom is needed to accommodate a growing family. I have considerable sympathy for the needs of Mrs Latouche but, in this case, I am not convinced that the design of the dormer is the only way of achieving the further living space required, and the design proposed would be harmful to the appearance of the area by virtue of its scale and its dominance of the roof face. It would conflict with guidance in the SPD and also with Policies BE13, BE15 and BE19 of the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which require developments, including house extensions, to harmonise with and complement the existing dwelling, the street scene and the character of the area.

8. The Council contends that the additional bedroom coupled with a reduced rear garden size would result in insufficient garden space at the property. The SPD indicates that two bedroom houses should retain at least 40 square metres of private usable rear garden space, and 3 bed houses at least 60 square metres. In this case, the rear garden would be reduced to 43 square metres, which is below the recommended standard. However, the garden area is over 13 metres long and the proposed rear extension would be only 3 metres in length. Furthermore, the area to the rear of the property is open and not overlooked, and there is a sizeable front garden area.

9. Whilst the rear extension would reduce the overall area of the rear garden, in this case I do not consider that the remaining garden would necessarily be insufficient, given its length and the general openness of the property's surroundings. On this basis alone, the proposal would not necessarily conflict with Policy BE23 of the UDP which indicates that new residential extensions should maintain external amenity space which is sufficient to protect the amenity of the occupants, and which is usable in terms of its shape and siting.

Conclusion

10. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would not be significantly harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers by way of its effect on amenity space, but that this does not overcome the harm that it would cause to the character and appearance of the area. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR