
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 April 2022

by **F Cullen BA(Hons) MSc DipTP MRTPI IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/22/3294217

19 Highfield Drive, Ickenham UB10 8AW

- 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 Zain Shamoon against the decision of London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref: 76019/APP/2021/2705, dated 8 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is two storey side/rear/front extension incorporating roof alterations and dormer windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for part single, part two storey side/rear extension (following demolition of side garage); roof alterations to include new crown/pitched roof with two rear dormers and new front, side, rear windows and rooflights, at 19 Highfield Drive, Ickenham UB10 8AW, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 76019/APP/2021/2705, dated 8 July 2021, 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:

PA-01 Rev A - Existing Plans, Site Location and Block Plan.
PA-01 - Block Plan.
PA-01 - Proposed Street View.
PA-01 Rev A - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.
 - 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.
 - 4) The first floor window in the side elevation facing No 17 Highfield Drive hereby permitted shall be glazed with permanently obscured glass to at least scale 4 on the Pilkington scale and be non-opening below a height of 1.8 metres taken from the internal finished floor level, for so long as the development remains in existence.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development proposed stated in the heading above is taken from the application form. However, in the Council's decision notice and the appellant's appeal form, the development proposed is described as part single,

part two storey side/rear extension (following demolition of side garage); roof alterations to include new crown/pitched roof with two rear dormers and new front, side, rear windows and rooflights. This is a more accurate description of the development proposed. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis and used this description in the formal decision above.

3. The most recent London Plan was formally adopted in March 2021 (the LP 2021). I have taken the date of the London Plan as stated in the Council's first reason for refusal (2020) to be an error.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are: a) The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and b) The effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of occupants of No 21 Highfield Drive, with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is located on the eastern side of Highfield Drive within an established residential area. No 19 Highfield Drive (No 19) is a detached, moderately sized, two storey house constructed of brick with a tiled roof. The property is set back from the adjacent highway and possesses a driveway and garden enclosed by a low boundary wall at the front and a generous landscaped garden bordered by a tall, close boarded, timber fence at the rear.
6. Development within the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by detached, medium to large, two storey dwellings, which are situated within generous mature gardens. Similar to No 19, they are set back from the highway, displaying a generally consistent building line, with many having little or no boundary treatment at the front, which imparts a pleasing spacious feel to the street. Whilst the general form and pattern of development along Highfield Drive provide some uniformity to the area, this is not matched by the properties themselves, which comprise a mix of architectural designs and materials, moderating the visual harmony of the street scene. Together, these qualities form the area's local built context.
7. The proposed development is essentially a remodelling of the existing property, including side and rear extensions with new windows, as well as a new roof with dormers and rooflights. I am aware of similar developments in the area and note those highlighted by the appellant which were granted planning permission by the Council or were allowed on appeal¹.
8. As a whole, the proposed development would considerably alter No 19's existing architectural form and design and thus its appearance. However, there is nothing before me which confirms that No 19 is of any particular architectural merit to warrant the retention of its existing style.
9. The proposed development would significantly increase the footprint and overall massing of No 19. Nevertheless, the comprehensive modification of the building along with the use of matching materials would mean that the additions, including the front gabled element, would not appear dominant,

¹ Application Ref: 11217/APP/2019/4070, 45 Highfield Drive; Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3224543, 34 Highfield Drive; and Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/17/3178470, 35 Highfield Drive.

excessive or incongruous. Moreover, the size and scale of the resultant dwelling would not seem out of place when compared to the majority of other houses in the neighbourhood, particularly to the south and west.

10. Similarly, even though the proposal would increase the bulk and alter the profile of No 19's roof, given the size of the remodelled dwelling, it would not appear unduly disproportionate or top-heavy. Additionally, the diversity of roof forms and shapes on other buildings in the locale would mean that it would not be discordant in the street scene.
11. The proposed side extension would reduce the separation distance between No 19 and No 21 Highfield Drive (No 21) at first floor level. Nevertheless, in line with the requirements of Policy DMHD 1² of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management Policies, 2020 (the HLP-P2), the proposal would achieve a 1m separation between the two properties at ground and first floor level. This would provide an adequate visual and spatial break between the dwellings and satisfactorily reflect the general spacing arrangement between houses in the area.
12. Overall, the proposed development would give the building a more ordered and cohesive composition which would positively contribute to the prevailing architectural variety of the area. The size, scale and massing of the resultant dwelling would respect its built context. Moreover, its relationship with adjacent properties would reflect the broad form and pattern of development in the area. Consequently, the proposed extensions and alterations would sit comfortably on the host property and enable the reconfigured building to assimilate well into the street scene.
13. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposed development would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area. As such, it would not be contrary to Policy D4 of the LP 2021 which requires development to deliver good design. It would also not conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 - Strategic Policies, 2012; and Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHD 1 of the HLP-P2. Together and amongst other things, these policies require development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment; be designed to the highest standards and harmonise with the local context; be well integrated with the surrounding area; and have no adverse cumulative impact on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area.
14. The Council's reason for refusal on this issue also cites policy D1 of the LP 2021. However, no specific reference to this policy is made within the delegated report. Furthermore, this policy relates to the assessment of London's form and character by Boroughs along with planning for growth. As such, I consider that the policy is not directly relevant to the appeal.

Living conditions of occupants of No 21 Highfield Drive

15. No 21 sits to the south of No 19. It is a large detached, two storey dwelling situated within a generous plot. No 21's northern flank wall runs along the shared boundary with No 19 and a tall close-boarded timber fence separates the rear gardens of the properties. Windows which serve habitable rooms at

² Part C), criterion iv).

the rear of No 21 at ground and first floor levels are positioned adjacent to the shared boundary.

16. The Council states that the proposed part single, part two storey side/rear extension (the proposed extension) would project beyond the building line of No 21 by approximately 2.4m at first floor level and by approximately 4.4m at ground floor level.
17. The height and depth of the proposed extension would be sizeable and positioned in fairly close proximity to No 21. Nonetheless, given its 1m separation from No 21 and even greater separation from the adjacent windows, it would not appear as an unduly dominant and overbearing feature, or give rise to an uncomfortable sense of enclosure, when viewed from the pertinent habitable rooms of No 21.
18. Moreover, taking into account the height and form of the existing rear timber boundary fence and the extensive linear garden of No 21, the proposed extension would not feel adversely oppressive when viewed from the outdoor private amenity space of the property.
19. In these respects, I am satisfied that the proposal would not materially diminish the outlook of occupants of No 21 and that their use and enjoyment of these internal and external spaces would not be detrimentally affected.
20. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposed development would not have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupants of No 21 Highfield Drive, with regard to outlook. As such, it would not conflict with Policies DMHB 11 and DMHD 1 of the HLP-P2 in so far as they require that development proposals should not adversely impact on the amenity of adjacent properties; and that alterations and extensions of dwellings should ensure that there is no unacceptable loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers.

Other Matters

21. I have had regard to the representations made by the occupants of No 21 which query the presence of a 1m gap between the proposed part single, part two storey side/rear extension and the boundary of their property. Drawing Refs: PA-01 - Proposed Street View and PA-01 Rev A - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations confirm the presence of a 1m separation. On this basis and due to the additional reasons set out above, I consider that the proposed development would not materially harm their living conditions.

Conditions

22. I note the suggested conditions in the Council's Appeal Questionnaire as well as reference to a compliance condition in the Council's delegated report. I have considered them in light of the advice set out in both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.
23. Planning permission is granted subject to the standard three year time limit condition. The relevant drawings are specified as this provides certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of No 19 and the area, a condition relating to external materials is necessary. In the interests of the living conditions of occupants of No 17 Highfield Drive, a condition relating to the obscure glazing and opening of the first floor window in the side elevation of No 19 is necessary.

Conclusion

24. The proposed development would comply with relevant policies in the LP 2021 and the HLP. There are no material considerations that indicate the application should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given and subject to conditions, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

F Cullen

INSPECTOR