



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2024

by L Clark BA(Hons) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/23/3329085

Blueberry Lodge, 24 Aspen Grove, Eastcote, Hillingdon HA5 2NL

- 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 Dr Manoj Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 76928/APP/2023/1183.
 - The development proposed is erection of single storey front porch and loft conversion with three front dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised in December 2023. As the changes do not materially affect the main issues in this case, the parties have not been invited to make further comments.
3. The proposal is for a front porch and three front dormers. The Council has indicated that it has no objection to the porch and, based on the evidence I have no reason to take a different view. The dispute between the parties relates to the dormers and these shall be the focus of my assessment.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed dormers on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property (No 24) comprises a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling, located on a prominent corner within a modern residential development. Its position within the development mirrors that of 12 Aspen Grove (No 12), with the roofs having a distinctly steeper pitch than those of adjoining dwellings. Nos 12 and No 24 have a similar scale and form to one another and they act as visual bookends framing the views out of the development towards open fields to the south.
6. Policy DMDH 1 Criterion E of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020) (Local Plan Part 2) relates to roof extensions. Amongst its provisions, the policy states that roof extensions should be located on the rear elevation only and subservient to the scale of the existing roof. The proposed dormers would be positioned to the front and they would therefore conflict with this element of the policy.

7. The roof of No 24 is an integral part of the street-facing roofscape within the development, which is predominantly characterised by dwellings of simple forms with plain roof slopes. Even though the proposed dormers would be aligned with the existing fenestration below, they would appear wider than the majority of the windows within the main body of the dwelling and significantly wider than the central window within the upper floor. Due to their height and bulk the dormers would appear as discordant additions to this prominent roof slope.
8. I note that 35 Aspen Grove (No 35) has dormers added to its front-facing roof slope. I do not know the background of this development, but the context is different in that No 35 is discreetly located at the edge of the development overlooking fields. The appeal site is far more prominent in the street scene of Aspen Grove and therefore this case can be differentiated.
9. The Council contends that the proposal would be contrary to Policy DMHB 12 – Streets and Public Realm of the Local Plan Part 2. However, this appears to be a broader design-based policy relevant to larger schemes. It is less applicable to proposals to extend individual dwellings.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the area. There would be conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One - Strategic Policies (2021), Policies DMHB 11 and DMDH 1 of the Local Plan Part Two and Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021). These policies are consistent with the Framework in seeking good design which is sympathetic to local character and the built environment.

Other Matters

11. The site lies within the Green Belt. The officer report considered that the proposed development would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the original building. I see no reason to take a different view.
12. I am told that the appellant has permission to convert the roof space of the property to habitable accommodation under ref: 76928/APP/2023/1811. Whilst I have not been provided with any plans for this scheme, there is no suggestion that it includes dormers. I have dealt with the proposal before me on its merits.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole. Material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L Clark

INSPECTOR