
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 December 2016

by A J Mageean BA (Hons) BPI PhD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/16/3159208

61 Embry Way, Stanmore, Harrow HA7 3AY

- 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 Agnes Majewska against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0548/16, dated 4 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is partial ground floor extension. Replacement of roof to convert the loft space into habitable rooms.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of this dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow located within a mature residential area of comparable dwellings on modest plots. The properties themselves are similar in appearance comprising red brick, hipped roofs and prominent front projections, many with bay windows. However there is some individual variety in design, particularly in terms of the prominence of the front projections. A number of the properties in the area have visible roof alterations and extensions, including the creation of central crown areas, the insertion of rooflights and dormer additions to the rear. However, most have retained their basic form and overall demonstrate a consistent appearance.
 4. The appeal property is sited in a reasonably prominent position on the western side of the road on a rising south to north gradient. It has retained what appears to be its original roof form, including both a prominent hipped roofed projection to the south east, and a further hipped element to the north west. Both these front parts of the roof have lower level ridge heights than the main roof ridge to the south west. This property has an existing single storey, flat roofed, full width extension to the rear, which wraps around the side of the building to the north west.
 5. The present proposal would include a single storey extension on the north western side of the front elevation, bringing this forward to around 1m of the front building line of the south eastern projection. This would also include
-

alterations to the existing roof so that a higher level mansard roof form would be created. This would also cover the existing flat roofed rear extension and include a lower level hipped gable over the remaining forward element of the south eastern projection. Roof lights and a rear facing dormer window would facilitate the creation of habitable accommodation in this roof area.

6. The Council states that the proposed rear dormer and roof lights would be acceptable, and I have no reason to take a different view.
7. The advice set out in the Supplementary Planning Document¹ (the SPD), states that both front extensions and roof alterations require careful consideration as they have the greatest potential impact on the character and visual amenity of the street scene. Specifically, roof alterations *should complement the original street character and not dominate buildings or impair their proportions or character*.
8. The appeal proposal would substantially alter the appearance of this dwelling, both by reducing the degree of modelling present in its roof and by regularising its plan form, thereby removing much of the distinctiveness and architectural subtlety of this building. The mass and bulk of the resulting roof form, together with the stepping forward of the north eastern building line would increase the prominence of this building locally. This, combined with the visibility of this dwelling on the rising street gradient, would mean that this proposal would be harmful to the overall coherence of the local street scene.
9. Given the individual variety of design locally, it is clear that each case should be considered both on its own merits and within the context of local design elements. In this respect both the Council and the appellant point to examples of extended properties which I was able to view on my site visit. Whilst many of these have significant roof alterations they appear to retain the basic form of these dwellings, with roofs pitching on various planes, and lower level front projections.
10. The appellant states that the proposed front extension would be small scale. Nevertheless, I note that this element would fill in most of the presently open area which gives the front projection its prominence. The degree of setback remaining would be insufficient to retain the distinction between these elements.
11. The appellant states that to a casual observer these alterations would go unnoticed. However of concern in this case is the erosion of those qualities which characterise this building and wider area. The appellant also notes that dwellings in this area do not have any protected status. Nevertheless, local and national policy provisions, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework² (the Framework), seek to ensure that design respects local character and appearance in order to safeguard the distinctive qualities of areas such as this.
12. I accept that the proposals would improve the living accommodation in this property for the benefit of the appellant, however this factor does not override design considerations. In this respect I have found that the effect of this scheme would be to diminish unacceptably the character, appearance and

¹ Harrow Supplementary Planning Document 2010: Residential Design Guide

² Paragraph 58

integrity of the host building and the sense of consistency in the area more generally.

13. I conclude that this proposal would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of this dwelling and the surrounding area. In this respect it would conflict with the Framework, Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of The London Plan 2016, Policy CS 1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, Policy DM 1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan 2013, and the SPD, all of which require a high standard of design which respects local character.

Conclusion

14. For these reasons the appeal is dismissed.

AJ Mageean

INSPECTOR