

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2017

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/16/3162043

19 Ashridge Gardens, Pinner, HA5 1DU

- 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 Mira Haria against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2942/16, dated 10 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is for the existing side extension and garage to be converted into kitchen and study with the erection of a small further width extension and first floor extension above existing side extension to create new bedroom and en-suite.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the existing side extension and garage to be converted into kitchen and study with the erection of a small further width extension and first floor extension above existing side extension to create new bedroom and en-suite at 19 Ashridge Gardens, Pinner, HA5 1DU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/2942/16, dated 10 June 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drg Nos 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9.
 - 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) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no windows shall be installed at first floor level in the flank walls of the development hereby permitted, facing Nos 17 and 21 Ashridge Gardens.
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Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed first floor side extension upon the character and appearance of 19 Ashridge Gardens and the wider street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling positioned to one corner at the end of a residential cul-de-sac of similar properties. Due to its position and relationship with the unattached neighbouring property at 21 Ashridge Gardens the appeal site has a splayed side boundary creating a 'wedge-shaped' plot. There is an existing single-storey extension to the side of No 19 which has a chamfered corner to the front so that its side elevation maintains a gap with the side boundary providing a pedestrian width access to the rear garden. The proposal would effectively build over the existing side addition at first floor level but recessed behind the dwelling's front elevation and with a hipped roof over. The outside corner of the first floor addition and roof over would be chamfered to follow the line of the existing extension below.
4. Paragraphs 6.54 to 6.56 of the Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted December 2010, deal with 'wedge-shaped' sites. The SPD recognises that such plots often form an integral part of an original street pattern and that the space they create between properties can often provide important visual breaks in the street scene. It further advises against ground and first floor side extensions that extend right up to a property's side boundary and wedge-shaped additions, which it advises can appear overbearing and can detract from the established pattern of development and openness of the street scene.
5. In this instance the extension would not be 'wedge shaped' but for the most part its walls would be parallel to the existing house save for the short stretch of chamfered wall to the front corner. Furthermore, the side extension would not occupy the whole width of garden between the house and boundary with a gap the size of the existing pedestrian access retained. The space between Nos 19 and 21 would not be unacceptably eroded and therefore given these circumstances I am not persuaded that the proposal conflicts with the guidance within the SPD for 'wedge shape' plots.
6. I am aware that the SPD goes on to state that extensions that are unduly complex or bulky will be unacceptable but in this case I find neither describes the proposal that is before me. In my assessment the chamfered side extension and roof over could not reasonably be considered complex by merely adding a modest sized roof plain to the corner. Whilst not a common design feature, the front, side and corner roof slopes would all follow a similar pitch and would terminate at the end of the extension's ridge. The Council accepts that the extension would not be excessive in scale and that the roof would be subordinate to the main roof. When this is also considered with the recessed position of the first floor extension and the fairly inconspicuous presence of No 19 within the cul-de-sac as a whole, I am satisfied that the side extension would appear as a reasonably well considered addition to the existing property and one that would have little impact upon the street scene, the character and appearance of which would be unharmed.

7. Overall, I find no conflict with the purpose of the SPD for helping to achieve a consistently high standard of design and layout in residential development in Harrow or with the aims and objectives of Policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012) or Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan (2013) insofar as they seek to achieve a high standard of design in all development and respect for an area's local character. Neither do I find conflict with Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2016) as it relates to similar matters.

Conditions

8. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area it is necessary to ensure that the new works are carried out in materials to match the existing. To safeguard the living conditions of both neighbouring occupiers in relation to privacy it is necessary to restrict any windows being installed within the flank walls of the extension, but only a first floor level.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given I conclude that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of 19 Ashridge Gardens, or the wider street scene. Accordingly, and in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR