
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 January 2017

by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/16/3158745
23 Roxborough Road, Harrow HA1 1NS

- 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 Hitesh Parmar against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2892/16, dated 14 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of house into 3 apartments with associated parking and external works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. 23 Roxborough Road is a two storey semi-detached dwelling with a two storey rear out rigger which is shared with 25 Roxborough Road and a single storey extension beyond. No 25 also has a single storey rear extension. To the other side of No 23 is a three storey building comprising flats, separated by a driveway giving vehicle access to the side of No 23. The rear of the appeal property is visible from the elevated section of the nearby Greenhill Way.
 4. No 23 is set within a street of terraced, semi-detached and detached buildings mainly in residential use with a mixture of modern and traditional design. The rear view of the properties within the row in which the appeal site is located contrasts starkly with the view of large modern commercial development on the opposite side of Greenhill Way. Nevertheless, the area to the north-west of Greenhill Way in which the appeal site is located maintains its mainly domestic scale and character. The mostly unaltered nature of the appeal site and the adjacent No 25 contribute positively to the mixed residential character and appearance of the area.
 5. The proposed rear dormer would be a large addition taking up most of the rear roof slope. As a result it would not be subordinate to the roof but instead present a bulky, top heavy appearance to the rear elevation and significantly
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- alter the traditional rear roof slope of the house. Due to its large extent it would be clearly visible from public vantage points on Greenhill Way.
6. The appellant points out that the dormer would meet the permitted development requirements. However, the dormer is before me for consideration as part of the appeal and therefore falls to be considered against relevant Policies and guidance. In this respect The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide 2010 (the SPD) sets out parameters which rear dormer extensions should meet to ensure that they achieve visual containment within the roof slope. The proposed dormer does not meet these requirements and this adds to my overall concerns regarding the size of the dormer within the roof plane.
 7. The two storey element of the proposal would be flat roof and extend the depth of the existing outrigger and wrap around it. As a result of its height and extent it would engulf the outrigger so that its original form is barely seen from Greenhill Way. The flat roof would contrast awkwardly with the original pitched roof of the host dwelling and the neighbouring property. As a result the original outrigger would no longer appear subservient to the host dwelling. Consequently the extension together with the dormer, rather than being subordinate, would be significantly obtrusive when viewed from the rear. Moreover the symmetry of Nos 23 and 25 would be unacceptably eroded.
 8. I acknowledge that there would be limited views of the ground floor of the extension and the front elevation of No 23 would remain largely unaltered. Furthermore, Greenhill Way is predominantly a busy traffic route. Nonetheless, it contains pedestrian facilities including a pedestrian crossing, the users of which would be able to view the appeal site. In addition, the openness of the traffic network in this location allows long views into the rear of the appeal site. Moreover, while there are some trees to the rear and side of the site I observed that the first floor of the extension together with the dormer would be visible from public vantage points.
 9. While flat roofs can be acceptable in some situations the SPD states that all roofs to two storey or first floor rear extensions should be designed to reflect the character of the dwelling house and those adjoining to provide a satisfactory appearance. I note the appellant suggests the addition of pitched roofs would be awkward and contrived. Nevertheless it is the combination of the flat roof, the wrap around and the large dormer extension that have a considerably harmful impact on the host building.
 10. The proposal would be adjacent to a large block of flats and I saw at my site visit that further flats were being constructed on the opposite side of Roxborough Road. The appellant suggests that aspects of these developments do not comply with the SPD, but does not specify which. The rear elevation of the flats adjacent to the appeal site contributes to the mixed domestic character and appearance of the area as a modern articulated building with pitched roofs and small dormers. It does not therefore in itself justify the addition of extensions to No 23 which would be harmful to the area.
 11. For the reasons above I conclude that the proposal would be considerably harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of The London Plan 2016, Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies 2013, the National

Planning Policy Framework and the SPD. These require, amongst other things that development is a high standard of design that responds to local context.

Other matters

12. The appellant states that the alternative plan for the property is to extend it to the limits of Permitted Development and to develop it as a House in Multiple Occupation. This would involve large extensions which would not be in accordance with the SPD. However I have seen no substantive evidence to indicate that there is a significant probability that such alterations would be constructed should this appeal be dismissed. This limits the weight that I can attach to it as a fall-back position.
13. Although reference has been made for the need for quality accommodation units of different sizes being available within the local housing market. I have seen nothing to suggest the level of that need or the type and tenure of accommodation required. I therefore give this suggestion limited weight.
14. The appellant has also drawn my attention to mistakes in the Councils application report. However, I am satisfied that based on my observations on my site visit and the evidence in front of me that I have made my decision based on the relevant facts.

Conclusion

15. I have found that the development proposed would considerably harm the established character and appearance of the area. That brings the development into conflict with the development plan. In the overall planning balance, other material considerations are not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. On that basis, the appeal scheme cannot be considered as sustainable development and thus does not benefit from the presumption in favour of such as set out in the Framework. Thus for the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR