

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2017

by C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3174475
Thrushwood, Pinner Hill, Pinner, HA5 3XT

- 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 R Blunt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/5758/16, dated 12 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side and rear extensions and new roof incorporating new second floor, including a rear dormer and two rear rooflights, and a single storey side garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and any relevant development plan policies.
 - The effect on the openness of the Green Belt.
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Pinner Hill Estate.
3. The further main issue is, if the proposal is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations. If so, would this amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether the proposal is inappropriate development and effect on openness

4. The Framework states that, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts. Within this context, Policy CS1.F of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012 and Policy DM16 of the Harrow
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Development Management Policies Local Plan 2013 state that the Green Belt shall not be eroded by inappropriate uses or insensitive development.

5. The proposed extensions would lead to a 111% increase in floorspace over the original dwellinghouse, which is not disputed by the appellant. This more than doubling of the floorspace would be clearly evident in the design and form of the extensions: there would be new two-storey extensions either side of the main house that would increase its width, a two storey extension to the rear, and a larger crown roof to the house.
6. These extensions would very substantially increase the volume of the property on the site when seen from Pinner Hill, and would be onto undeveloped areas that currently contribute to the open character of the area. Thus, the development would plainly harm the openness of the Green Belt, and the Framework states the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
7. It is thus concluded on the first issue that the scale of the proposed extensions would represent a disproportionate addition to the original building, and lead to harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposals therefore represent inappropriate development that is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and in conflict with the Framework and Policy CS1.F of the Core Strategy. I attach substantial weight to this harm.

Effect on character and appearance

8. The property lies within the Pinner Hill Estate Conservation Area. I saw at my site visit this is an attractive residential area, with housing at a low density of development with large gardens and generous spacing between properties. There is variation in architecture as it is evident that many houses have been altered or extended over the years and new housing has occurred over the years, though the existence of Arts and Craft properties add a particularly attractive character to the Area.
9. The extension of the appeal property by two side additions would retain a generally balanced appearance to the house when seen from the road. However, to facilitate these extensions and the rear extension, as well as to provide accommodation within the roofspace, the house would be altered with a new crown roof form. I share the concerns of the Council that the design and scale of this roof would be excessively bulky and detract from the simple Arts and Craft appearance and scale of the original house, which is characteristic of the Area. The spaciousness of the plot would be materially reduced due to the size of the side extensions, and this would add to the impression of the extended house being of excessive scale for the plot.
10. Under s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 I have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The design and form of the proposed extensions would be harmful to this character and appearance, and so conflict with the relevant policies that seek to ensure a high standard of design that respects local character and seeks to conserve heritage assets, namely Policies 7.4B, 7.8C and 7.8D of the London Plan, Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Local Plan 2013 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents: Residential Design Guide 2010, and Pinner Conservation

Areas Appendix 8 – Pinner Hill Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2009.

Other considerations

11. The Framework advises that 'very special circumstances' to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
12. I acknowledge the proposed extensions would not lead to harm to living conditions of adjoining residents due to the distance retained to other properties. I also acknowledge the wish for the appellant to extend the property to provide additional accommodation, and that the house is smaller than many other houses in the area. However, the works proposed to the property would have a very clear harmful effect on the openness of the Green Belt, and would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area
13. I therefore do not consider the matters raised in support of the proposals to clearly outweigh the substantial weight which must be attached to the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given, the conflict with national and local planning policy means that the appeal fails.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR