
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2017

by C J Ford BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 31 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3175270

Ashwood, Barrow Point Lane, Pinner, London HA5 3DH

- 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 Paul Braham against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0256/17, dated 17 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension and first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - i. the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area, and
 - ii. its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of The Moat House with particular regard to visual impact.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Ashwood is a 1970s detached house. It is located within an area that contains residential properties of a mixed age, form and character. The Moat House stands to the south west and is a more substantial property of an inter-war period appearance. Through a combination of its sizeable form and design detailing, The Moat House makes a notable positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the Barrow Point Lane street scene. Its design includes a large feature front facing gable and associated extensive roof slope on the eastern side of the house.
4. The western flank of the appeal property projects forward of this important feature of The Moat House and is positioned only a short distance away. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the built form of Ashwood was designed to be sympathetic to the siting and character of the neighbouring earlier house. It is single storey on the western side and increases in depth and height as it advances to the east, away from The Moat House. As a result, there is an existing area of open space at first floor level on the western side of the dwelling which is reflective of that found above the neighbouring roof slope of

The Moat House. The open space ensures there is a harmonious relationship between the two properties and that there is no strong visual sense of Ashwood harmfully dominating or enclosing the eastern side of The Moat House.

5. The proposed development would add a first floor to the western side of Ashwood. Whilst it would sit a little below the ridge of the existing two storey part of the house, it would result in the substantive loss of the open space described above. Notwithstanding the small set back of each house from the common boundary, the existing harmonious relationship would be replaced by an abrupt and stark contrast between the two storey flank wall of Ashwood and the neighbouring roof slope of The Moat House.
6. The additional high level bulk, projecting beyond the neighbouring front gable, would also result in the eastern side of The Moat House being visually hemmed in within its otherwise spacious plot and dominated by the more prominent western part of Ashwood. As the proposed first floor extension would result in an awkward and unsympathetic relationship between the two houses, it would be an incongruous addition that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the properties as well as the wider street scene. Whilst many houses have extensions of a similar scale to the proposal, it must be considered having regard to its specific context and in this case its relationship with the neighbouring property.
7. The appellant is mistaken in the belief that the Council supported the proposed two storey rear extension. However, it would simply infill the gap in the existing two storey built form at the south east corner of the house. Whilst it would be visible from Barrow Point Lane and Burhill Grove, it would respect the character of the house and the pattern of development in the surrounding area. It would therefore not conflict with the Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD) in this regard. Even when considered cumulatively, the proposed additions would not appear disproportionate to the original building.
8. It is acknowledged there are some positive aspects to the proposed scheme. The existing uncharacteristic front verandah would be removed and along with further alterations it would lead to a property that would be more in keeping with the scale and appearance of other detached houses in the street scene. There would also be the benefit of increased living accommodation at the property. Nevertheless, these considerations do not outweigh the identified harm that derives from the bulk and width of the first floor extension and its proximity to The Moat House.
9. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. It would conflict with Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan 2016 (LP) as well as Core Policy CS 1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012 (CS) and Policy DM 1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies 2013 (DMP). Amongst other things, these policies seek to resist development that would be detrimental to local character and appearance.

Living conditions

10. Whilst the first floor side extension would not comply with the 45 degree code set out in the SPD, the breach would be marginal. From the first floor windows in the gable of The Moat House there would be a limited oblique view of the

front corner of the extension. A side window which stands forward of the gable would directly face the development. Nevertheless, an acceptable outlook would be maintained by its set back.

11. There would be an increased sense of enclosure in respect of the garden area in front of the gable. However, as this space is visible from the public realm, it is unlikely to be used in the same intensive manner as the more private areas of the garden. Consequently, the extension would not be detrimental to the external enjoyment of the property.
12. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would not have an unacceptably harmful effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of The Moat House with particular regard to its visual impact. It would not conflict with Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the LP or Policy DM 1 of the DMP. Amongst other things, these policies seek to resist development that would be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Other Matters

13. It is acknowledged that a first floor side extension of similar proportions was granted planning permission on appeal in 1993, (Appeal Ref: T/APP/M5450/A/93/221925/P8). Nevertheless, it is apparent the main issues dealt with by the Inspector related to the living conditions of the occupiers of The Moat House. The conclusions reached above on living conditions are consistent with the earlier decision.
14. The Council's further concern in dealing with the current proposal in relation to character and appearance is a valid consideration given the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 and its emphasis on securing high quality design.

Conclusion

15. Notwithstanding the finding on living conditions, the harm in respect of the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area is an overriding consideration. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C J Ford

APPOINTED PERSON