



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2017

by J Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/17/3173926

48, 50 and 50A Old Church Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2RP

- 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 Messrs A Mavropoulos, R Parmar & A Atanasov against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/4942/16, dated 12 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as "proposed two storey front and porch extensions with a loft conversion to properties 48, 50 & 50A Old Church Lane with roof alterations, conversion of garages to habitable rooms."
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for proposed two storey front and porch extensions with a loft conversion to properties 48, 50 & 50A Old Church Lane with roof alterations, conversion of garages to habitable rooms at 48, 50 and 50A Old Church Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2RP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/4942/16, dated 12 October 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans PA/48-50-50A/E.01; PA/48-50-50A/E.02; PA/48-50-50A/P.03; PA/48-50-50A/P.04; PA/48-50-50A/P.05; PA/48-50-50A/P.06; PA/48-50-50A/P.07; Site Plan.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials set out on plans PA/48-50-50A/P.03 and PA/48-50-50A/P.04.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until works for the disposal of surface water and foul water shall have been provided on the site to serve the development hereby permitted, in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on (a) the character and appearance of the area; and (b) whether satisfactory living conditions would be provided for occupiers of the proposed development.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Old Church Lane and Wolverton Road are residential streets with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses in a variety of architectural styles, heights and ages of development. The building line of the houses undulates slightly along Old Church Lane, with the appeal properties and the detached house at No 52 set slightly further back from the street than the other nearby houses. The appeal properties at 48, 50 and 50A Old Church Lane form a terrace of three 1960s houses adjacent to the corner of Old Church Lane and Wolverton Road. The appeal properties have not been extended and are uniform in design and layout, barring slight differences in fenestration and the replacement of the garage door to No 50A with a window.
4. The proposed development would include single and two-storey front extensions, conversion of the garages to habitable rooms, insertion of additional windows in the flank elevations, and alterations to the roofs to raise the ridge height and to provide rear dormer windows to all 3 properties.
5. Directly to the rear of the appeal properties, the 3 houses on Wolverton Road are similar in design and layout. However, they are not identical as they lack the front garages of the appeal properties. Furthermore, given their layout at right angles from Wolverton Road and their relationship with 2 different streets, the 2 terraces are not viewed together from most vantage points.
6. The established building line of houses along both streets is variable. Although the appeal properties lie at approximately the same building line as the neighbouring house at No 52, the houses beyond No 52 along Old Church Lane are considerably closer to the street. Similarly, on the other side of the Wolverton Road junction, the next terrace of houses at Savernake Court is significantly further forward than the appeal properties. Given the lack of uniformity in alignment of existing houses, I do not consider that the proposed single-storey and two-storey front extensions to the appeal properties would be detrimental to the established building line and its role in defining the character and appearance of the area.
7. The introduction of the two-storey front extensions to the appeal properties would increase the width of the flank elevations to Nos 48 and 50A. In the case of 50A, this proposed flank elevation would adjoin an access track between Nos 50A and 52. As No 48 adjoins Wolverton Road, the proposed flank elevation would face the rear garden of No 4 Savernake Court on the other side of the road junction with Wolverton Road. While both flank elevations would be visible from the street scene, the variation in building lines along the street means that flank elevations of other properties are also visible. As a result, I do not consider the proposed flank elevations to be incongruous or inappropriate. While the appeal properties would be subject to considerable alteration, as the proposed development would involve the same changes to all 3 terraced properties, it would represent a harmonious and holistic approach to development. Although the existing houses are of a simple character with consistent features, the proposed development would maintain this.
8. I acknowledge that the proposal would introduce a noticeably different roof height to the houses, with large rear dormers. However, given the range of roof heights and forms along Old Church Road and Wolverton Road, I do not consider that the proposed increase in roof height and the insertion of dormers would be so disruptive to the houses and the area as to be unacceptable. Given the variety of roof designs that exist in the immediate and wider area, the proposed roof would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.

9. I conclude that the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore compliant with the requirements of policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016, policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, policy DM1 of the Harrow Council Development Management Policies 2013 (DMP) and the guidance contained in the Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (RDGSPD). These policies seek to ensure that development delivers high quality environments, respects local context and distinctive local character. It would also accord with the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure high quality design.

Living Conditions

10. The Council notes in its officer report that the proposed bedroom 5 to each house would only have a single rooflight, with a consequent effect on outlook and daylight. Although the proposed rooflight would be relatively small, each proposed bedroom 5 would also be small. Accordingly, I consider that sufficient daylight would enter the proposed bedroom to allow acceptable living conditions. Furthermore, as the extensions would form part of 3 large family homes, I consider that the living conditions with regard to outlook for the occupiers of Nos 48, 50 and 50A would not be detrimentally affected by the proposed bedroom 5 of each house having only a rooflight. The overall internal space and the positioning of fenestration within the house would be acceptable.
11. I conclude that that the appeal proposal does not cause any harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of the appeal properties. Consequently, there is no inconsistency with policy 7.6 of the London Plan, policy DM1 of the DMP and guidance contained in the RDGSPD.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, and taking into account all other relevant matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

13. I have included a condition requiring provision for the disposal of surface water and foul water as I understand that the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and it is necessary to ensure the development is adequately drained. Although the Council did not provide a condition to this effect, the Council's Infrastructure Team confirmed during the course of the application that drainage matters should be conditioned.
14. In addition to the condition on drainage, I consider it necessary to specify conditions limiting the lifespan of the planning permission, confirming the approved plans and the materials for the proposed extensions. All of these conditions are required to ensure certainty, with the condition on materials also ensuring that the appearance of the extensions is satisfactory.

J Gilbert

INSPECTOR