

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 August 2017

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3177174

1a Mount Drive, Harrow, HA2 7RW

- 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 S Siddiqui against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1295/17, dated 20 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single and two storey side to rear extension with front bay window (demolition of attached garage).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single and two storey side to rear extension with front bay window (demolition of attached garage) at 1a Mount Drive, Harrow, HA2 7RW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/1295/17, dated 20 March 2017, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: SJ.PA.2015.105RevP02, 106RevP02, 107RevP02, 108RevP02 & 109Rev P02.
 4. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted the windows in the ground floor north western flank elevation of the proposed development shall:
 - (a) be of purpose-made obscure glass,
 - (b) be permanently fixed closed below a height of 1.7m above finished floor level,and shall thereafter be retained in that form.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.
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Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is on a wedge shaped plot and is a detached dwelling of more recent origin than most in this area. The locality is of established residential character and pleasing appearance in which bay fronted homes, generally semi-detached with hipped roofs, prevail. The proposal is as described above and would primarily provide for additional living and bedroom accommodation.
4. A considerable portion of the proposed works has planning permission via a December 2016 approval (Ref P/5103/16). The appeal plans seek to enlarge and 'bring forward' the first floor level along with a bay window and to roof over this larger side extension with a ridge height continuing from the main home. In essence the Council is concerned that this would be an overly bulky extension with an unsympathetic design giving consequent impact upon immediate and wider aesthetic qualities. Certainly the frequently used approach for visually successful side extensions would encompass upper level set-backs and a lower subservient roof form. However to my mind there are a number of reasons why this norm would not need to be necessarily adopted as a design solution on this dwelling.
5. As well as being on an unusual shaped plot the host property is of a different design to those in the neighbourhood in that it has a much more modest bay feature which the scheme would duplicate; the frontage work would be more visually modest than if the same exercise was undertaken on other properties. The roof would continue to have a main hip of the style found locally and the overall length of the main ridge when extended on this detached home would be less than that found prevailing locally as it is generally semi-detached pairs which are spanned. Furthermore the appeal dwelling is at lower floor level than its parallel neighbour and has an overall roof plane and slopes which are shorter and lower than the dwellings to the south east or across the road. This is not a development which would catch or jar on the eye by standing overly proud. A degree of symmetry being formed by the existing and planned bays would not be out of place when bay duplication is a characteristic of the area.
6. In addition one of the reasons in seeking a set back is often to prevent or lessen any 'terracing effect' however in this instance the appeal property is at the end of a run of homes and then abuts, on a diagonal, rear gardens from properties around the corner. The result is that the extension, at its frontage, would have an appreciable gap to the nearest boundary, there would be no question of terracing, and there would be no crowding towards two streets as one can envisage on a true corner plot.
7. Policy DM1 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, Policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, taken together and amongst other matters, call for development to be appropriately designed for its site and setting, of a suitable form and character and protective of local distinctiveness. I conclude that the appeal scheme would not run contrary to these policies which share similar *objectives* to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide (2010), a document which cannot be expected to cover in detail every eventuality.

Conditions

8. The Council suggests the standard commencement condition along with the requirement for materials to match the existing building. I agree this latter condition would be appropriate in the interests of visual amenity. I also agree that there should be a condition that works are to be carried out in accordance with listed, approved, plans; to provide certainty. The use of obscure glazing with opening restrictions is advocated by the Council for the side ground floor windows and I would agree with this for the protection of neighbours' privacy. Despite the case made by the Council I see no need for specific restrictions on the insertion of other openings on this relevant flank as any such works would require specific planning permission and could be judged on their merits.

Overall conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property or the locality. Accordingly the appeal is allowed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR