
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2017

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3180631

15 Courtfield Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2JZ

- 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 J Englezou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1701/17, dated 10 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 2-storey side extension, part rear extension and demolition of garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was submitted in the name of Mr J Englezou. The appeal was submitted in the name of Mrs Astrid Englezou with Mr J Englezou given as the agent. It has subsequently been confirmed in writing that the appeal is to progress in the name of Mr J Englezou.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of 15 Courtfield Crescent and the street scene.

Reasons

4. No 15 Courtfield Crescent is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling that forms one half of two originally similar semi-detached pairs (Nos 13/14 and 15/16) at the end of a residential cul-de-sac. Nos 14 and 15 are the most prominent of the four being set directly at the head of the cul-de-sac and visible at an angle to each other in the vista along this short straight stretch of Courtfield Crescent. Due to their position in relation to each other and the road's turning head, each of these four properties has a fairly large 'fan-shaped' plot, narrow to the front and wide to the rear.
5. No 15 has previously been extended to the side and rear with a single-storey wrap-around extension. It also has a single-width garage to the side, set at an

acute angle to the flank wall of the house but which runs parallel with and along the plot's common side boundary with No 14. It is proposed to demolish the existing garage and to project the existing side/rear extension further sideways to accommodate a new attached garage with first floor accommodation over that would wrap partially around the property's rear elevation.

6. Part 6 of the Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD) provides design and layout guidance for householder development. As a general design principle it advises that extensions should harmonise with the scale and architectural style of the original building and the character of the area. Regarding roof design, it advises that it is generally desirable for a first floor or two-storey extension to be roofed to reflect both the material and design of the existing roof, including normal eaves detail. Paragraph 6.37 of the SPD deals directly with side extensions and recognises that they have considerable potential to cause harm to the character of the area and that, to avoid such negative impacts, proposed side extensions should reflect the pattern of development in the street scene.
7. In this instance the proposed first floor accommodation would be set within a 'mansard-style' roof with low eaves and steeply tiled sides rising to a crown equivalent in height to the eaves line to the main dwelling, and with shallow projecting dormers to the side and rear elevations. In my assessment the extension would show no respect for the form of the original dwelling. The pitch and form of the roof would contrast significantly with the traditional hipped roof over the existing dwelling, as would the scale and proportions of the extension. The addition would appear over-wide in relation to the width of No 15, and excessively bulky at first floor level with a disproportionate amount of tiled roof extending to the side at first floor level and in stark contrast to the rendered elevation at first floor level to the main dwelling. Although the extension would be recessed behind the front wall of the original dwelling, it would appear unrelated to it in terms of its size, form and detail. This would amount to poor design that would noticeably unbalance the appearance of No 15.
8. I have carefully considered the impact of the proposed works upon the street scene having particular regard to the orientation of the property and the visual impact of the existing garage. Contrary to the appellant's view, I do not find the existing garage to be unattractive or visually harmful. It is modest in terms of both its size and presence and I see no particular benefit to its removal that would weigh in favour of the appeal proposal.
9. Whilst much of the new works would be obscured from sight by the bulk of the original dwelling, the extension would not be invisible from the public domain. Its furthest corner would be visible in a view along Courtfield Crescent but more significantly the direct relationship between it and the existing property would be openly seen when following the footpath around the perimeter of the turning head in front of Nos 13 and 14. Although it may not dominate the streetscape, it would be an awkward, bulky and unsympathetic addition that would detract from the visual appearance of the street scene.
10. I have had regard to the size of the plot but this has little bearing upon the visual impact of the extension upon the street scene.

11. I am aware that all the other three properties within this small group of similar dwellings have been extended in the past. I do not know the planning history to any of these but was able to see the visual impact of all during my visit. The side extension to No 16 is single-storey but nonetheless demonstrates how an addition with an unsympathetic roof form, flat in this case, can appear poorly related to the host dwelling and somewhat conspicuous in the street scene. The two-storey side extension to No 14 is modest in its scale and entirely undetectable from the public domain due to its significantly recessed position and shallow projection.
12. No 13 has a fairly substantial two-storey side extension. However, this appears as a well-integrated addition that successfully assimilates itself into the street scene. None of these examples, nor any other extensions that I saw in the locality, lend any weight in favour of the appeal proposal.

Conclusion

13. I appreciate that the application was a revised proposal following on from the refusal of an earlier scheme and I recognise the appellant's attempts to overcome the Council's earlier objections by reducing the width of the extension by some considerable degree. However, I have considered this appeal on its own merits and, for the reasons given, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of 15 Courtfield Crescent and the street scene. It would therefore conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), as it relates to the impact of development upon local character, and the design considerations of Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan (2013). For these same reasons there would be conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it seeks to secure high quality design as one of its core planning principles.
14. Therefore, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR