



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2017

by Alexander Walker MPlan MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21st November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3181345

464A Honeypot Lane, Stanmore HA7 1JW

- 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 Rajesh Vagela against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1389/17, dated 24 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 25 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor side extension at 464A Honeypot Lane, Stanmore HA7 1JW in accordance with the terms of the application, P/1389/17, dated 24 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 16_057_S0, 16_057_S1, 16_057_S2, 16_057_S3, 16_057_P0, 16_057_P1, 16_057_P2 and 16_057_P3A.
 - 3) 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.

Main Issues

2. In their reason for refusal, the Council refer to the effect of the proposal on neighbouring residential amenity as well as the character and appearance of the area. The Delegated Application Report refers to the proximity of the extension to the neighbouring property, No 462, and as a result it would be unneighbourly. However, there is no indication as to what harm there would be on the living conditions of the occupants of No 462. Based on the evidence before me and the observations I made on site, I consider the main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring residential property, No 462 Honeypot Lane with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Honeypot Lane is a residential road predominantly comprising two-storey semi-detached dwellings. Whilst properties vary in their design, the regularity of their spacing and the uniform building lines make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, the set-back position of the dwellings and the wide road, pavements and grass verges creates a sense of spaciousness that enhances the pleasant suburban setting.
4. The appeal property forms part of what was once a semi-detached dwelling that has since been subdivided. The properties are located on the corner of Honeypot Lane and Collins Avenue. In response to the corner plot location the front elevations 'turn' the corner rather than follow the established building line of properties on either of these roads. Due to its corner plot location and its orientation, the southern elevation of the appeal property is prominent in views when travelling along Honeypot Lane.
5. The appeal property was originally an extension to No 464 Honeypot Lane and was subsequently converted into a separate dwelling. The southern section comprises a single-storey element to the front rising to a two-storey element to the rear. The proposal effectively seeks to extend the two-storey element further forward above part of the single-storey element.
6. The extension would be modest in size and would be set back approximately 1m from the existing two-storey front elevation. Whilst the property is prominent in the streetscene, the extension would be read against the backdrop of the existing elevations of the dwelling.
7. I acknowledge the Council's concern that although accepting its modest size, when read in conjunction with the existing extensions it would appear excessively bulky. However, I do not agree. The existing flat roof with parapet single-storey element and the significantly set-back first floor appear awkward and incongruous and fail to positively reflect the strongly defined frontages of other properties in the vicinity. The proposal would appear as a natural infill extension that would sit comfortably within its setting and create a stronger, more defined frontage. Consequently, the proposal would make a positive contribution to the streetscene.
8. I find therefore that the proposal would not significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would comply with Policy DM1 of the London Borough of Harrow Development Management Policies (DMP) 2013, which seeks to ensure that development achieves a high standard of design. It would also comply with Policy CS1 of the London Borough of Harrow Core Strategy (CS) 2012, which, amongst other things, states that all development shall respond positively to the local context in terms of design. In addition, the proposal would also comply with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016, which seek to ensure that development has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass; and, is of the highest architectural quality. Furthermore, it would accord with the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I also find no conflict with the London Borough of Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2010, which provides guidance on residential extensions.

Living Conditions of neighbouring residents

9. The extension would extend beyond the front elevation of the neighbouring garage at the adjacent property, No 462 Honeypot Lane. However, the garage lies adjacent to the boundary between the two properties and has no windows facing the appeal property. Similarly, there are no windows in the north elevation of No 462.
10. The extension would not be any closer to No 462 than the existing dwelling and whilst it could be argued that the first floor extension could have an over dominating effect, this would only be experienced from a small section of the No 462 to the front of the garage. However, No 462 has a large front yard and therefore any loss of outlook from it would not significantly harm its usability and therefore would not have any material adverse effect on the living conditions of its occupants.
11. I find therefore that there would not be any material loss of outlook that would result in any significant harm to the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring dwelling, No 462 Honeypot Lane. As such, it complies with Policy DM1 of the DMP, which seeks to ensure that development has regard to any impact on neighbouring occupiers. It would also comply with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016, which seek to ensure that people feel comfortable in their surroundings and development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings. Furthermore, it would accord with the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I also find no conflict with the London Borough of Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2010, which provides guidance on residential extensions.

Conditions

12. I have had regard to the various conditions that have been suggested by the Council. For the avoidance of doubt it is appropriate that there is a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area a condition is also necessary requiring external materials to match the existing building.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

Alexander Walker

INSPECTOR