
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: 1st December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/17/3179911
771 and 773 Kenton Lane, Harrow HA3 6AH

- 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 Dev Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0264/17, dated 18 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 8 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Revised drawings were submitted with the appeal that included the existing rear dormer extension on No 771 Kenton Lane. These drawings provide a more accurate representation of the existing property and the proposed development and do not change the substance of the scheme. As a result, I do not find that any interested parties would be prejudiced by my consideration of their content. Therefore, I have taken into account the revised plans in my determination of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwellings and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Kenton Lane is a predominantly residential road that generally comprises two-storey semi-detached and terrace properties. Although the design of properties varies, common architectural details including pitched roofs, bay windows and gable features make a positive contribution to the streetscene. The appeal properties are part of two neighbouring pairs of semi-detached dwellings, which form part of a small row of similar properties lining the west side of the road. The generous spacing between these properties and the general set back position of properties along either side of the road create a sense of openness that makes an important contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area.
5. The proposed ground floor side extensions would adjoin each other. Whilst there would be a gap retained at first floor level, this would only be 750mm wide. Consequently, the enclosure of the space between the properties to such an extent would unacceptably erode the openness of the area and detract from the character

of the semi-detached properties and the streetscene, which is partly typified by the generous spacing between the properties on this stretch of the west side of the road. I note that there are other buildings within this group of semi-detached properties that have single-storey extensions which are adjacent to each other. However, the generous spacing between the first floors of these properties and the overall openness of the area is retained.

6. The appeal properties are on different ground levels. No 773 is approximately 700mm higher than No 771. As a result in the difference in ground levels, the resultant step in the ground floor extensions would appear incongruous and exacerbate the harm the erosion of the openness would have on the character and appearance of the streetscene.
7. Paragraph 6.58 of the London Borough of Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2010 states that an extension should have a sense of proportion and balance, both in its own right and in its relationship to the original building and should not dominate the original building or the surrounding streetscape. Paragraph 6.58 of the SPD goes on to state that that rear extensions should be designed to respect the character and scale of the original house.
8. Part of the single-storey extension to the rear of No 773 would project approximately 3m off the rear elevation of the proposed two-storey element. However, the two-storey element would project approximately 3m off the rear elevation of the original dwelling. As a result of its significant depth, this part of the proposal would not respect the scale and proportions of the original dwelling and would fail to appear subservient. I note that this part of the extension would be adjacent to the existing single-storey rear extension that extends approximately 10m from the original rear elevation of No 771. However, the Council confirms that this was granted permission in 1990 and was assessed against different planning policies and guidance. Whilst I acknowledge the extension's presence I do not consider that it makes a positive contribution to its host dwelling or the overall character and appearance of the area that should be replicated.
9. In addition, the two-storey rear extensions would have dual hipped roofs and would be approximately the equivalent width of the original dwellings. As a result of their width, and when read in conjunction with the other elements of the extensions, they would be excessively bulky and would dominate the rear elevations of the dwellings, failing to respect the scale of the original buildings.
10. Paragraph 6.64 of the SPD states that all roofs should be designed to reflect the character of the dwelling house and those adjoining to provide a satisfactory appearance. The dual hipped roofs would introduce an incongruous feature as the roof design of the host properties comprises full pitched gables. This incongruity would be exacerbated by the disjointed link between the hipped roof and the existing dormer extension on No 771. I note the appellant's contention that these four hipped gables reflect the series of dormers on the rear of the nearby Primrose Care Home. However, these dormers are significantly smaller and have a more sympathetic, subservient relationship with the host building.
11. I acknowledge that the rear of the properties is not readily visible from public views and existing trees partly screen them from views from properties to the rear on Winston Close. However, the extensions would be clearly visible from the rear gardens of neighbouring properties on Kenton Lane.

12. I have had regard to the numerous properties referred to me by the appellant that have previously been extended. The Council confirm that these predate the current development plan and guidance. In any event, I do not consider that the presence of poor design justifies any further detriment to the character and appearance of the area.
13. The appellant argues that as the SPD amplifies the saved policies of the UDP, which has now been superseded, it cannot be given any weight. However, the SPD remains an adopted document and is referred to in the supporting text to Policy DM1 of the London Borough of Harrow Development Management Policies (DMP) 2013. Furthermore, I find no conflict between the guidance set out in the SPD and the adopted development plan. Accordingly, I attribute the SPD significant weight.
14. I find therefore that the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host dwellings and the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would fail to comply with Policy DM1 of the DMP, which states that proposals which fail to achieve a high standard of design and layout, or which are detrimental to local character and appearance, will be resisted. It would also fail to accord with the guidance set out in the SPD. Furthermore it would fail to comply with Policy CS1 of the London Borough of Harrow Core Strategy 2012, which states that development shall respond positively to the local and historic context in terms of design, siting, density and spacing, reinforce the positive attributes of local distinctiveness whilst promoting innovative design and/or enhancing areas of poor design; and, that extensions should respect their host building. In addition, it would also fail to accord 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, be of the highest architectural quality.

Other Matters

15. Concerns have been raised regarding the use of the appeal properties as Houses in Multiple Occupancy and the potential effects of such uses. However, there is no indication that the appeal properties would be used as such and I have determined the appeal on the basis of the proposal before me. Furthermore, the proposal does not include for the two properties to be turned into one.
16. I acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the behaviour of existing tenants of the properties and property values. However, these matters have not had any bearing on my consideration of the planning merits of the proposal.
17. In respect of the effect on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, I am satisfied that the proposal would be sufficient distance from neighbouring windows and boundaries to ensure that it would not result in any significantly harmful overlooking or loss of outlook.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Alexander Walker

INSPECTOR