



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November, 2017

by **G. Rollings, BA (Hons) MA(UD) MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 12th December, 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/17/3180390

33a Welldon Crescent, Harrow, HA1 1QP

- 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 A&N Architects Ltd. against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0899/17, dated 20 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 9 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion incorporating new dormer to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers, with regard to the internal space provision.

Reasons

3. The appeal site accommodates a semi-detached building comprising two flats, with the appeal concerning the extension of the upper flat. This flat is located on the first floor of the building, with a separate entrance and stairwell leading upward from ground level. The appeal proposal seeks to convert the space beneath the existing pitched roof into habitable accommodation, thereby extending the first floor flat, and incorporating the construction of a rear-facing roof dormer with additional roof lights in the front-facing roof pitch.
4. The floor area of the new second floor would be 25 square metres (sq.m.) and used as a bedroom. The extended flat, over the first and second floors of the building, would therefore become a three-bedroom dwelling. The Government's nationally described space standard¹ sets minimum internal space requirements for dwellings, with 84 sq.m. set as the minimum standard for a three-bedroom, four-person dwelling laid out over two storeys. This requirement is applied in a local context within Policy 3.5 of *The London Plan* (2016).
5. The Council has calculated the approximate ultimate floor area to be 75 sq.m., and this has not been refuted by the appellant. This provision is below the minimum requirement for flats of this nature. Given that the minimum floor

¹ *Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard*, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2015.

space requirements also represent good practice and appropriate design, and that the London Plan defines three-bedroom dwellings as suitable for accommodating families, the provision of an undersized and potentially cramped extended dwelling is not appropriate.

6. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have an unsatisfactory amount of internal space, which would harm the living conditions of future occupiers. It would conflict with the Council's adopted *Development Management Policies* (2013) (DMP) Policy DM 1 and London Plan Policy 3.5, which require development to be built to a high quality of design and be suitable for its users. I have not included the Council's cited DMP Policy DM 26 or London Plan Policy 7.6 as these are not relevant to this main issue, but I have had regard to its adopted *Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (2010) and the Mayor of London's *Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance* (2016).

Other matters

7. I acknowledge the appellant's evidence that other buildings in the nearby vicinity have been extended or converted in a manner similar to that proposed in this appeal. However, I am not aware of the full circumstances of these cases. Moreover, I have decided this appeal in accordance with the adopted policies in force at the time of my decision, and I do not consider these previous examples to represent a precedent that should be followed in this instance.
8. I have also read the appellant's comments regarding the Council's conduct during the application stage, but in deciding this appeal, have limited my consideration to the relevant planning merits of the proposal.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Rollings

INSPECTOR