



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2017

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 10 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/17/3179300

24 Imperial Drive, North Harrow, Harrow, HA2 7LQ.

- 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 Ms D. Knight against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1452/17, dated 17 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 23 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion at 24 Imperial Drive, North Harrow, HA2 2LQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/1452/17, dated 17 January 2017, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 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, drawings: 01 Rev:-A, 02, block Plan 1:500 and location plan 1:1250.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed rear dormer on the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The property the subject of this appeal, 24 Imperial Drive, is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with a traditional hipped roof. The area is characterised by similar two-storey semi-detached dwellings set well back from the road.
4. The property was extended with a two-storey side extension following the grant of planning permission in 2008. The appellant proposes the conversion of the roof space to provide additional habitable accommodation.

5. The design includes for three rooflights set into the street facing roof slope and a flat roof dormer in the rear roof slope. The Council found that the three rooflights to the front roof slope would be acceptable. From what I have seen and read, and as they would be modest in scale, I find no reason to reach a contrary view.
6. The Council has drawn my attention to the Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD - *Design and Layout Guidance for Householder Development 6* (2010) (SPD). This, at paragraph 6.70, sets out guidance to ensure that new dormer extensions will be visually contained within roof slopes. In particular it requires, as in this case, for it to be set in 0.5 metres from the party wall line, set back at least 1.0 metre from the eaves measured externally along the roof slope and, in the case of a gable roof, 1.0 metre from the gable end. Paragraph 6.72 goes on to advise that as a guide, where a single rear dormer is provided as part of a two-storey side extension, it should never be wider than that which could be created (in accordance with paragraph 6.70 of the guidance) if an original hipped roof was altered to provide a gable end. Where this could be achieved, as here, it suggests that two or more separate dormers should be created with a minimum space of 500 mm between them. While the proposed design would accord with the first and second criterion, it would not accord with the third as a single dormer is proposed.
7. In my judgement, due to the overall size of the proposed dormer, the fact that it is to be located well up from the eaves line, set well in from the party wall line and is to be built into a substantive roof slope, I consider, notwithstanding the guidance set out in paragraph 6.72 of the SPD, that in this case it would, nevertheless, achieve an acceptable level of visual containment being the overarching consideration of the guidance. Further, the proposal would meet the objectives of Policy DM1 of the Harrow Council Development Management Policies (adopted July 2013) (DMP) as it seeks to achieve a high standard of development.
8. I therefore conclude, in respect of the main issue, that the proposed development would not cause harm to the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore accord with Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan (2016), DMP Policy DM1 and Policy CS1.B of The Harrow Core Strategy (Adopted February 2012) and the guidance set out in the SPD as they relate to the quality of design and the need to maintain the character and appearance of the area.

Other matters

9. Although not a reason for refusal the Council, when determining the application, raised a concern in respect of the potential for overlooking or perceived overlooking of neighbouring occupiers at numbers 22 and 26 Imperial Drive from the proposed Juliette balcony. Based on the limited evidence to the contrary I am not persuaded, from my own observations on site and given this built up suburban area where there is already some degree of mutual overlooking, that this would in any case be so significant here as to cause harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers.

Conditions

10. The conditions follow from those suggested by the Council. To ensure a high quality development, I shall include a condition about the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building.
11. In the interests of certainty, I shall impose a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusions

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

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR