
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2019

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/19/3229046
5 Silverston Way, Stanmore HA7 4HS

- 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 and Mrs Enzo and Patrizia Ruggieri against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0668/19, dated 12 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear dormer at 5 Silverston Way, Stanmore HA7 4HS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/0668/19, dated 12 February 2019, 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 218158/01 and 218158/03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Procedural matter

2. There have been a number of applications to extend the appeal property in recent years. Permission was granted in October 2015 (P/2933/15) for works including two small rear dormers, although in fact a single dormer much larger than the two permitted was built and remained in place at the time of my site visit. A further application seeking to regularise the scheme as built was refused in February 2017 (P/5569/16) and an appeal dismissed in April 2017 (APP/M5450/D/17/3170190). The current application which is the subject of this appeal described the development as "proposed reduction in size to dormer by 1.6m following on from pre application advice". However, both for clarity and to more accurately reflect the nature of the development for which permission is sought, as well as the status of the dormer currently in place, I have amended the description as above.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a large 1930s semi-detached suburban house with a generous rear garden, and which is typical of the street and neighbourhood in which it sits. Like many of the neighbouring properties it has been altered and extended over the years, but it retains much of its original character and both the property itself and the wider area have a pleasant and spacious feel.
5. The proposed development is a dormer on the main rear roof pitch. In line with advice in the 2010 Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD) it would not rise above the ridge, and would be set more than 500 millimetres from the party boundary with No 7 Silverston Way. The SPD also advises that dormers should be set at least 500 millimetres from the valley between the main and return roof slope of the rear extension, and the proposal in this case would fall some way short of that. However, the generous size of the dwelling and the depth of its existing rear extension means that the dormer would still appear as a subordinate feature in the roof. While it would not therefore comply with every element of the guidance in the SPD, the design and positioning of the dormer mean that it would not overwhelm or dominate the existing character and appearance of the host property.
6. Several neighbouring dwellings also have rear dormers, some of which are clearly visible from the rear garden of the appeal property and appear similar in size to that proposed in this appeal. While this in itself would not of course justify allowing an inappropriate development to go ahead, the existing examples are accommodated comfortably within the roofscape of the generally large and well-spaced houses without causing harm to the feel of the area. In this context, the scale and design of the proposal in this case is appropriate to and in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. The Council referred to the earlier appeal relating to this property (APP/M5450/D/17/3170190), and the previous Inspector's finding that the single large dormer in that case was awkward and clumsy in appearance and dominated the rear roof. I do not disagree with my predecessor's conclusion in respect of that development. However, I consider that the reduced size of the dormer proposal now before me, and in particular the fact that the dormer would no longer straddle the roof valley, means that the current proposal would have a much lesser impact on the host property's character and appearance.
8. Taking the above points together, and notwithstanding the limited conflict with the SPD guidance, I conclude that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance either of the host property or the surrounding area. The development would therefore comply with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the March 2016 Consolidated London Plan, which seek to ensure that development is of a proportion and scale appropriate to the structure and character of the area. It would also comply with Policy CS1

of the 2012 Harrow Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that extensions respect both their host building and the character of suburban areas, and Policy DM1 of the 2013 Harrow Development Management Policies, which seeks to encourage high-quality design. For the same reasons, it complies with the guidance of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to encourage good design.

Conditions

9. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have specified the approved plans so as to provide certainty. In order to protect the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area I have also included a condition requiring materials matching the existing dwelling to be used for the extension.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other relevant matters raised I conclude that the proposal complies with the development plan as a whole, and the appeal should be allowed.

M Cryan

INSPECTOR