The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2019

by Mr W Johnson BA(Hons) DipTP DipUDR MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/19/3233016
5 Masons Avenue, Harrow HA3 5AH

- 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 Gouri Gupta against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
- The application Ref P/5431/18, dated 7 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 1 February 2019.
- The development proposed is described as: 'Loft conversion to incorporate 1no. residential unit (Re-submission of: P/1728/18)'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site is a 3no. storey mid-terraced property, which comprises a mixed-use, with commercial premises located at ground floor and residential accommodation on the upper floors. The proposal is to erect dormer extensions over the main roof of the property and over the rear outrigger to create an additional storey and a residential unit in the resulting roof space.

4. The surrounding area has a mixed character of commercial and residential properties. Although, I was able to internally access the host building, access to the external areas of the site were limited due to ongoing construction works being undertaken. However, I was able to clearly view the rear of the host property and its neighbours from a public pavement on Palmerston Road, outside a car park, opposite Gladstone Way. From this vantage point, I could clearly assess the proposed effect of the scheme.

5. I noted that the rear of these properties on Masons Avenue have a variety of extensions, including outriggers and flat roof dormer windows, particularly noticeable were those present at No's 7 and 9 Masons Avenue, which the former adjoins to the host property. Additionally, I noted the large purpose built commercial premises at Station House (No's 11 to 13 Masons Avenue) that has been more recently constructed to the majority of the surrounding properties, which has 4no. storeys.

6. I find that the proposed development would differ significantly from the other extensions in the locality, as it would be more extensive, occupying the majority of the available area above the property. Additionally, this would be further emphasised due to the increase in height of the outrigger, which is already a notable feature on the host property due to its height and width. Although, it is apparent that attempts have been made to reduce the effect of the scheme through angling the section of proposed roof over the outrigger away from No 3 Masons Avenue, ensuring that it does not exceed the current ridge height, and using a palette of materials that complement the host property.

7. However, I find that the incorporation of such measures would not provide a sufficient level of mitigation against the significant harm that the proposed development would have on the host property or surrounding area. This harm would arise through the excessive bulk and massing of the proposed dormer extension, resulting in a disproportionate addition to the detriment of the appearance of the host property, which would be clearly visible in the wider street scene.

8. For the reasons above, I conclude that the development would have a significantly detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area, and hence it would conflict with the design, character and appearance aims of Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan 2013, Policy 7.4B of the London Plan 2016. Additionally, it would fail to accord with the overall design aims of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document - Residential Design Guide 2010 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

9. I have had regard to no objections being raised by the Council in respect of the effect of the development on the living conditions on neighbouring or future occupiers. However, a lack of harm associated with living conditions is a neutral factor that weighs neither for nor against the development.

10. I acknowledge that the development would make some positive contribution to the Council's supply of housing sites, albeit limited, and that it would bring some social and economic benefits to the area through the provision of a new dwelling and during the construction phase of the development. However, I find these benefits to be relatively limited and not sufficient to outweigh or alter the harm identified in respect of my conclusions on the main issue. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own planning merits and concluded that the scheme is not acceptable for the reasons set out above.

Conclusion

11. For the reason given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

W Johnson

INSPECTOR