
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2019

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/19/3236219

39 Cecil Park, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5HJ

- 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 Mandy Haslam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2007/19, dated 25 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is rear dormer, including 2no. conservation rooflights to front roof slope and 1no. conservation rooflight to side roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of host dwelling and the Tookes Green Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located within the CA. As identified in the Tookes Green CA Appraisal and Management Strategy 2009 (CAAMS) there is a high quality of architecture throughout the CA which, in addition to its evolution from a medieval hamlet to one of the first Metroland developments of suburban housing alongside the Metropolitan railway, forms a key part of its special interest and hence significance.
4. The buildings on Cecil Park are substantial properties and whilst there is variation in their detailing, due to consistency in the high quality of their design, height and setback from site frontages, there is a uniform character to the street scene. The rear of the properties, in particular the roofscape, although less prominent, also contributes to this attractive suburban character. The dwelling at the appeal site, being unaltered at roof level, is reflective of the typical built form and character of the street and semi-detached dwelling of which it forms an integral part.
5. The dormer proposed to the rear would occupy much of the hipped rear roof slope, appearing cramped and, with its glazed elements being similar in size to those on the existing dwelling, would compete visually with the host property and result in a top-heavy appearance to the building that would be at odds with its established, unaltered character, particularly at roof level.

6. As stated in the Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide (2010) (SPD) dormer windows should generally be subordinate features in the roof. This would not be the case with the appeal scheme. Whilst the dormer would utilise materials that would broadly match those used in the existing building, be inset from the side elevation and lower than the existing roof ridge, due to its overall size and bulk it would dominate the rear roof slope.
7. The existing dwelling is within an elevated position from the street and due to the spacing to the adjacent property there would be views of the side of the proposed dormer from the street. Due to its overall size and bulk, the proposed dormer would diminish the character of the host property and have an unacceptable harmful effect on its character and appearance and that of the CA.
8. There are 2 rooflights proposed to the front elevation that would be set out in a staggered arrangement. The rooflights would result in a cluttered appearance that would detract visually from the simple and unaltered character of the existing property. They would be incongruous additions within the street scene and detract from the high quality of architecture in the surrounding area, resulting in unacceptable harm to the CA, and being at odds with criterion h) of the guidance within the CAAMS which seeks to protect front and side roofs from rooflights.
9. The proposal would therefore have a negative effect on the significance of the CA, the result would be "less than substantial" harm when considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework. There would be no public benefits arising from the proposal that would outweigh the harm I have identified above, and to which I have attached considerable importance and weight.
10. I note the rooflight proposed to the side elevation would have limited visual impact and the appellant has suggested that 1 of the rooflights proposed to the front roof slope could be removed, with this matter being addressed by condition. Whilst this may reduce the harm to a limited extent, it would not outweigh the overall harm I have identified in relation to the rear dormer.
11. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policies CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012); Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Harrow Council Development Management Policies (2013); and Policies 7.4B, 7.6B, 7.6D, 7.8C and 7.8D of the London Plan (2016) which seek to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design, having regard to massing, bulk, scale and height, respecting their host building, and conserving the significance of the heritage asset, as supported by guidance contained within the SPD and the CAAMS.

Other Matters

12. The appellant has referred me to a rear dormer window at No 26 Cecil Park which they advise has planning permission and they consider identical to that proposed. However, I have not been presented with full details of that scheme including the circumstances. I noted that there are a number of differences between No 26 and the appeal property including the size and detailed design of the two dwellings. There is also less of a gap between No 26 and its neighbouring property and the dwelling is not within an elevated position. Unlike the appeal proposal, the dormer at No 26 is not visible from the street.

The situation at No 26 does not therefore appear to be directly comparable to that at the appeal site and in any event, I have determined the appeal on its own merits and this other example does not, therefore, lead me to a different conclusion.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Denby

INSPECTOR