
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2020

by Benjamin Webb BA(Hons) MA MA MSc PGDip(UD) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/19/3238304

22 York Avenue, Stanmore HA7 2HS

- 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 A Natha of Motte Properties Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2711/19, dated 15 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as a part double storey rear extension and assorted internal alterations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have edited the description of the development proposed in the banner heading above from that given on the application form. This is in order to remove unnecessary reference to the property address.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. York Avenue is lined on either side by rows of semi-detached dwellings in a limited range of repeated designs. These feature regular rectangular forms with roofs which remain predominantly hipped. Dwellings roughly align both front and back, are reasonably closely spaced, and similarly positioned within their plots. This provides the street with a strongly consistent appearance which lends distinctiveness, and is appreciable from both the front and the back.
5. Many dwellings have been extended to the rear at ground floor level. Some have had rear dormers added, and some have had hip to gable extensions. All of these modifications have occurred at the appeal site where they have resulted in change to the original character of the building. In this regard I note that the ground floor component of the proposed extension is very similar to that previously approved by permission reference P/5131/18, and that the latter has already been built. Whilst the ground floor component of the appeal proposal is not therefore contentious, and nor too are internal alterations, the

first floor component of the extension is nonetheless an integral element of the overall design.

6. From within the garden of the appeal site the backs of many dwellings lining the same side of the street can be clearly seen. It is reasonable to consider that a similarly high level of inter-visibility exists from within other gardens. Within this view no first floor rear extensions are visible. Their absence is indeed made strongly apparent by the close alignment of rear elevations, and it is clearly perceived despite the presence of ground floor and roof level additions such as those at the appeal site. No evidence has otherwise been set before me which indicates that first floor rear extensions are a typical feature of buildings within the street as a whole.
7. Based on the available evidence therefore, the siting of part of the proposed extension at first floor level would be at odds with the established pattern. This would be appreciable viewed from within many of the neighbouring gardens, from within which it would appear incongruous.
8. Incongruity would be accentuated by the fact that the roof form of the first floor extension would not to match that of any other roof currently present on the building. It would be further emphasised by the poor relationship that would be formed between the roof of the extension and the existing dormer. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant's claim that the roof would be accommodated below the dormer, the plans show the roof directing abutting or cutting into it. It was also clear during my site visit that insufficient space exists between the eaves of the dwelling and the bottom of the dormer to accommodate a roof of the size and type proposed.
9. The decision notice additionally makes reference to the relationship that would be formed between the extension and the gable end. However, it is unclear what aspect of this relationship would cause harm. This does not however diminish or alter the extent to which the first floor extension would fail to integrate with the form of the host dwelling, and the character and appearance of the area.
10. For the reasons outlined above I conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, which states that all development shall reinforce the positive attributes of local distinctiveness, and that extensions should respect their host building; Policy DM1 of the Harrow Council Development Management Policies 2013 and Policy 7.4B of the London Plan 2019 (the LP), which each require a high standard of design; Policy 7.6B of the LP which states that buildings should comprise details that complement local architectural character; supporting guidance set out in the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (the SPD); and relevant provisions relating to design within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

11. I note that no neighbours objected to the scheme, and that some support was in fact expressed. I further acknowledge that the scheme was revised to enable compliance with the '45° Code' set out in the SPD, and that the living conditions of occupants of neighbouring dwellings would not be adversely affected. This does not however alter my consideration of the design merits of

the first floor extension set out above, or the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.

12. Whilst the appellant states that there is a pressing requirement to enlarge and modernise the property by adding a further bedroom, it is unclear what this pressing requirement is. I therefore attach little weight to this claim, and it again does not alter my findings above.

Conclusion

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

Benjamin Webb

INSPECTOR