



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by William Walton BA MSc Dip Env Law LLM CPE BVC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/19/3239128

7 Torrington Drive, Harrow HA2 8ND

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Siddiqi against the decision of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2375/19, dated 26 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is to erect a first-floor single storey extension, to the side and rear of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling occupying a site on the corner of Torrington Drive and Brendon Gardens in Harrow. The rear garden is separated from Brendon Gardens by a solid wooden fence. The property has been extended at ground-floor level at the side and the rear. It has also been extended at loft-level to the side by removing the hipped roof and creating a gable-end roof and to the rear through the introduction of a dormer window running virtually the width of the original dwelling. The surrounding area is predominantly composed of 2-storey semi-detached properties although a more recently constructed 3-storey flatted development called Fontwell Court is located opposite the appeal site.
4. The appeal proposal comprises an L-shaped first-floor side and rear extension. It would be set in from the front and side elevations and set down slightly from the ridge of the existing gable-end roof. It would incorporate a small gable end projecting towards the back garden. The development would not increase the size of the existing build footprint. There was some disagreement between the Council and the appellant concerning the dimensions of the proposal and, for the purposes of this decision, I have adopted those provided by the appellant.
5. The extension would be clearly visible from Torrington Drive and from Brendon Gardens. Viewed from the front the extension would add considerably to the width of the original house. Viewed from the side the extension would be

almost flush with Brendon Gardens creating a high and expansive blank wall immediately to the rear of the footway. Viewed from further down Brendon Gardens the extension would wrap around the corner of the house making it very difficult to see any of the elevations of the original dwelling.

6. The introduction of the extension would result in a rather awkward relationship with the dormer window above. The dormer would lose its degree of visual separation and containment, appearing instead to be just one part of a much larger addition. The contention that the extension would help to conceal the dormer window is not one that I consider has any merit. Thus, the development proposal would be intrinsically harmful to the design of the dwelling. The simple design of the original semi-detached dwelling would be subsumed by the cumulative effect of several extensions to its detriment.
7. Despite being designed with a set back, set in and set down, when viewed in combination with the existing gable-end roof extension and the dormer roof addition, the proposal would be excessively large, bulky and incongruous, and would not be subordinate to the original dwelling. This would also be to the detriment of the adjoining property whose intrinsic symmetrical quality would be even further eroded.
8. For the reasons stated above I conclude that the appeal proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of both the host property and the wider area. Consequently, I find that the proposal would conflict with Policy DM1 of the Council's Development Management Policies 2013 (DMP) which seeks to protect the character and appearance of the urban environment by ensuring that new development is of an appropriate mass, scale and bulk. It would also be contrary to policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016 which seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality of design that respects its surroundings.
9. Finally, I find that it would be conflict with the advice contained in the Council's Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD 2010 that where a hipped roof has been extended to form a gable-end roof, a further side extension is inappropriate. Although this document pre-dates the DMP I nevertheless attach considerable weight to it as the principles contained within remain relevant.

Other Matters

10. I note the appellant's submission that the rear dormer received a Certificate of Lawful Use although, I would add, that this decision would have been a matter of law rather than being based upon a planning judgement. Thus, I do not consider that to be a relevant consideration in the determination of this appeal. I also note and agree that the appeal property has quite a large garden. However, I do not consider that this provides any degree of screening and, irrespective of that matter, because I find that the proposed development is intrinsically harmful to the design of the host building, I do not consider this to be a relevant matter.
11. Finally, I have looked at those properties within the area, referred to me by the appellant, which incorporate side extensions. During my visit I formed the view that these properties were exceptions to the general character and appearance of the neighbourhood in which most of the properties had not been substantially altered. The relevant extensions were probably approved against a different policy context, as the appellant acknowledges. Thus, whilst

acknowledging that 2 of the 3 properties are, like the appeal proposal, located on a corner I find that it is not possible to draw any material conclusion from this submission. For this reason, I do not find that they are persuasive or set any binding precedent. Consequently, I have determined the appeal proposal on its own merits.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons set out above the appeal is dismissed.

William Walton

INSPECTOR

