



Appeal Decision

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th May 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/19/3243739

Gordon House, 6 Honister Gardens, Stanmore HA7 2EH

- 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 Mrs Dorothy Pinnock against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref: P/2785/19, dated 20 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 2 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is rear and side dormers to provide staff accommodation in connection with a supported living scheme.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for rear and side dormers to provide staff accommodation in connection with a supported living scheme at Gordon House, 6 Honister Gardens, Stanmore HA7 2EH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: P/2785/19, dated 20 June 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: PA 001 dated 18/06/19, PA 002 Rev A dated 31/08/19, PA 003 Rev C dated 03/09/19, PA 004 Rev B dated 04/10/19, PA 005 dated 18/06/19.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes incidental to the supported living accommodation use of the property known as Gordon House, 6 Honister Gardens, Stanmore HA7 2EH.

Procedural Matters

2. In response to travel restrictions currently in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic I consider that this appeal can be determined without the need for a physical site visit. This is because I have been able to reach a decision based on the information already available. Both the appellant and the Council were given an opportunity to provide comments on this approach and I have taken any responses into account.

3. The appellant has stated that amended plans¹ were submitted to the Council. They show the proposed rear dormer sited further away from the chimney on the appeal property and address a discrepancy on the original plans with the roof ridge. These amended plans are not listed on the decision notice and are dated after the Council made its decision. Nevertheless, I have taken these plans into account in my decision as the Council and interested parties have had the opportunity to comment on them during the course of the appeal. Hence, there is no possible prejudice.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property comprises a semi-detached former care home. It has been the subject of extensive alterations, including a 2 storey side and single storey extensions. At least some of the extensions appear to have taken place some time ago and blend in comfortably with the original property. The site is located on the corner of Honister Gardens and Honister Place. The surrounding area is residential in its character.
6. The property has gained planning permission² to be converted into 4 supported living units. The proposed dormers would enable the roof space to be utilised for associated staff accommodation.
7. The Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2010) (SPD) employs a cautious approach to the use of dormers and roof extensions because of potential impacts on the appearance and character of the building and the streetscene. However, the SPD also goes on to say that consideration will be given to the type of roof, the scale of the proposals, and the character and appearance of the house and those adjacent. Hence, whether or not dormers and roof extensions would be acceptable is a matter of judgment based on the visual effects on the property and its surroundings.
8. The proposed side dormer would be of a modest scale and bulk. It would be set down from the roof ridge and well up from the eaves level. It would appear subordinate and allow for the retention of much of the hipped roof plane around it. As a consequence, it would not appear disproportionate or overly prominent when viewed from the streetscene. The visual effects would also be lessened by the proposed use of tile hung materials.
9. The 2 storey side extension has appreciably increased the size of the rear roof plane. The proposed rear dormer, due to its siting and proportions, would be visually contained. It would be well set in from the side nearest Honister Place and angle away from this boundary. This would limit the broader visual impacts from its scale and bulk on the character of the area. As with the side dormer, the proposed external wall materials would be in keeping. Accordingly, it would not be obtrusive in these surroundings.

¹ Plan refs: PA 003 Rev C dated 03/09/2029, PA 004 Rev B dated 04/10/2019.

² Council ref: P/4690/17

10. Overall, the existing extensions enable the proposal to be satisfactorily accommodated in character and appearance terms, and it would not appear uncomplimentary in relation to the existing roof form.
11. I conclude that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the building and the area. As such, it would comply with Policy 7.4B of the London Plan (as amended, 2016), Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012) and Policy DM1 of the Harrow Council Development Management Policies (2013) which, collectively, seek for proposals to respect host buildings, not harm and have regard to the character of an area, and promote high quality design.
12. When the type of roof, the scale of the proposal, and the character and appearance of the house and those adjacent are considered, it would also accord with the SPD.

Conditions

13. In addition to the timescale for implementation, I have imposed a condition concerning the approved plans for the purposes of certainty. As set out above, this includes the amended plans. I have also imposed a condition concerning the use of matching materials to the existing property, in the interests of protecting character and appearance. A condition is also imposed to ensure the proposal provides incidental accommodation, in the interests of protecting living conditions.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all matters that have been raised, the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR