
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3249925

12 Elm Park, Stanmore HA7 4BJ

- 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 S Danilet against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0002/20, dated 2 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension; single and two storey rear extension; single storey rear extension (demolition of garage, conservatory and rear extension).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of the development in reaching my decision as it more fully describes the details of the development than that given on the original planning application form. The appellant's appeal form also makes reference to the updated description.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed two storey side and rear extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the area, including the Old Church Lane Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property at No. 12 Elm Park (No. 12) is a two storey detached dwelling with a garage and conservatory at the side, side roof dormers and a large outbuilding to the rear. It is located within a row of detached and semi-detached properties of varied character set back from the road behind a front garden/driveway. No. 12 has a traditional two storey brick gable projecting from the front of the property with bay windows and white render above.
5. The surrounding area is of mixed character with traditional two-storey residential properties to the north and south, a large two storey supermarket car park to the east and an enclosed green open space with mature established trees and landscaping to the west.

6. The appeal site has an extensive planning history relating to proposals to extend the property. The proposal would entail a two storey side and rear extension that would be set-in at first floor level from the common side boundary and constructed with a hipped flat topped crowned roof stepped down below the side dormer and the ridgeline of the main house. The single and two storey rear infill extension would project out broadly in line with the existing rear elevation of the main house and the adjacent property at No. 16 and would be set back from the side boundaries.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide 2010 (SPD) states that extensions should be subordinate to and harmonise with the scale and architectural style of the original building and the character of the area. Paragraph 6.8 of the SPD specifies that two storey side extensions should be set back a minimum of 1m from the front wall of the house and stepped down below the roofline in the order to retain the symmetry and rhythm of the original building, by reducing the bulk and avoiding a terracing effect in the streetscene.
8. The appeal property is on a relatively spacious plot and as such the extensions would not appear overlarge, relative to the overall plot size. Given the site's location, the proposed two storey rear extension would only be partially visible between the buildings when passing the site. The rear extensions would be seen in the context of the current varied architectural styles at the rear of the host property and the surrounding properties.
9. Against this backdrop, the scale, form and siting of the proposed two storey rear extension would not look significantly out of place or excessive in relation to the built form of the host property and the adjacent properties. The overall scale and proportions of the rear extensions set back from the side boundaries, together with use of matching materials and fenestrations would ensure that this part of the development would sit relatively unobtrusively against the built form of the host property. The proposed rear extensions would therefore achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and as such would limit any significant adverse impacts on the street scene in the surrounding area.
10. The scale and form of the proposed two storey side extension built in line with the front of the main house would nevertheless still be a significant addition relative to the main property. As such, although it would be set-in and stepped down, the proposed side extension, combined with the existing side dormer and the crowned roof over the proposed extension, would result in substantial bulk on this side of the dwelling that would be out of character with the traditional form and appearance of the host building.
11. These shortcomings would be exacerbated by the proposal's position, where the proposed side extension would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Elm Park. The proposed two storey side extension, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from the architectural integrity of the host property. As such, I consider that the proposed side extension would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.

12. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the design and layout of the proposed development has been carefully considered and redesigned in order to minimise any adverse impacts on the host property and the area and to take into account the Council's comments on the previously refused scheme at the appeal property¹. However, whilst the set-in at first floor level on the side extension would allow reasonable space to prevent any significant terracing effect and the use of matching materials and fenestrations would assist in integrating the proposal with the host property and the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
13. Given the location of the appeal property adjacent to the Old Church Lane Conservation Area (CA), special attention has to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA and its setting. However, given the scale and siting of the proposed extensions, boundary treatment and the separation distance between the appeal site and the CA, there is only limited inter-visibility. I consider that the appeal scheme would have a neutral material impact and would preserve the setting of the CA.
14. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed two storey side extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would be contrary to the overall aims of Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan 2016, Core Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan 2013 and the SPD, which I consider are the relevant policies and guidance that the proposal conflicts with. These policies and guidance, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development demonstrates a high quality design that respects and responds positively to existing buildings and the local character and distinctiveness of the area. I find no direct conflict with Policy D1 of the Draft London Plan 2019 which relates primarily to character area assessments.
15. In addition, the proposal would not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework that developments should seek to secure a high quality of design (paragraph 124) that are sympathetic to the local character (paragraph 127).

Other Matters

16. I note the appellant's comments regarding the various benefits arising from the proposal including the scheme's high quality design. While I have given them some weight, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR

¹ P/0147/19