

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2021

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3257928

42 Toorack Road, Harrow HA3 5HU

- 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 D Hussain against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1706/20, dated 20 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with hip to gable roof enlargement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.
3. Notwithstanding the description of development set out above, which is taken from the application form, it is clear from the plans and accompanying details that the development also includes the installation of a dormer window and roof lights. The Council have dealt with the proposal on this basis and so shall I.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling extended in the form of a two storey side and rear extension and that sits on a prominent corner plot. The general design of properties in the area vary between pairs of semi-detached dwellings and short runs of terraced housing. A small number of properties have rear dormer windows or hip to gable roof alterations. The design of properties and alterations gives the area a degree of variety.

6. The proposed development would involve the alteration of the existing side extension's roof from a hip to a gable design and the construction of a rear dormer window. The Residential Design Guide SPD (2010) (SPD) supports roof extensions where they meet a number of criteria. Having regard to the SPD the proposed dormer window would be set in from the neighbouring property, set in from the edge of the roof and set back from the eaves. However, it would not leave a sufficient gap between the main roof and the return roof slope of the extension, but rather would cut into it.
7. Whilst it would not occupy the whole of the roof the proposed dormer window would not be visually contained due to its position in the roof and its overall width. It would be unduly large and bulky dominating the roof slope and harming the appearance of the host property, notwithstanding its original width.
8. I acknowledge that the proposed alteration to the roof of the extension would be subordinate to the host property. However, it would significantly alter the appearance of the dwelling and the contrasting hip and gable roof designs would result in visual confusion. As such, it would result in an unsympathetic alteration to the roof scape drawing the eye and adversely affecting the appearance of the host property.
9. Notwithstanding the varying design of houses in the area the size and position of the dormer window and the unsympathetic roof design combined with the prominent position of the already extended host property would result in an incongruous feature that would be a highly visible feature from within the surrounding area.
10. Whilst I have given the appellant's personal circumstances careful consideration, I am mindful of the advice contained in the Planning Practice Guidance that in general, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is probable that the proposal would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material. For these reasons, I find that this factor is not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
11. I note the presence of other extended properties in the area. However, I have not been made aware of the individual circumstances that lead to them being constructed. In any case, every appeal must be considered on its own merits. The presence of other extensions in the area does not justify the harm that I have identified.
12. In conclusion the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area contrary to Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan (2016), Policies D1 and D3 of the Draft London Plan Intend to Publish (2019), Policy CS1B of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan (2013) and the SPD which, amongst other things, seek to ensure high quality design and extensions that respect the host property and surrounding area in terms of scale, design and layout.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR