



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 10 February 2021

by S J Lee BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3259169

1 Leabank Close, Harrow HA1 3QA

- 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 Ms Wendy Huang against the decision of London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1720/20, dated 21 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is first floor front infill roof extension (removal of inset balcony); three rooflights in front roofslope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor front infill roof extension (removal of inset balcony); three rooflights in front roofslope at 1 Leabank Close, Harrow HA1 3QA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/1720/20, dated 21 May 2020, 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: 0335 01; 0335 03.
 - 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.

Procedural Matters

2. I have used the description of development from the appeal form and decision notice as this is more accurate than that given on the original application form.
3. The existing front elevation differs to that shown on the submitted plans. The plans show what appears to be a garage door to one side of the main entrance. I saw that this had been replaced by a window. For the avoidance of any doubt, I have determined the appeal based on the submitted plans only.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Sudbury Hill Conservation Area (SHCA).

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a relatively large detached dwelling in a small residential cul-de-sac. As the site resides in the SHCA I have had regard to my statutory

duty to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. I have also had regard to paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which expects great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

6. The extracts of the Sudbury Hill Conservation Area Appraisal (SHCAA) provided state that the significance of the SHCA is largely derived from the prominent detached and largely unchanged Victorian villas 'of great charm and character'. The ribbon of development which follows the winding route of Sudbury Hill and London Road, changes in gradient and dense vegetation, also create an attractive and varied townscape. This is consistent with my own observations. The SHCAA refers to the rear of Leabank Close being visible from Green Lane and Julian Hill and that the dwellings are of an unobtrusive form which do not detract from the area.
7. The dwellings on Leabank Close are not all the same size or orientation, but nevertheless the consistency of their original design can be seen. However, there is no indication in the SHCAA that the design of the dwellings are of any importance to the area. They are not of any particular architectural or historic merit. As such, they make a neutral contribution to the character, appearance and significance of the SHCA.
8. The inset roof balcony is an original design feature seemingly common to all dwellings on the cul-de-sac when first built. The development would lead to the loss of this feature and an obvious change in appearance. However, this is not necessarily harmful. These balconies have already been replaced by large dormers on two of the dwellings. As such, the homogeny of design has already been disrupted without any harm to the underlying character of the cul-de-sac.
9. The development would have no effect on the shape or size of the roof slope or the scale of the dwelling as a whole. In that regard, the underlying character of the dwelling would not change. The resulting roof form would also not be objectionable. Although deeper than the rear roof slope, it would nevertheless appear as a fairly typical dual-pitched roof with rooflights. As a result, it would not appear as an unduly incongruous feature and would not be harmful to the character of the host dwelling or wider area.
10. The replacement of the balcony with three rooflights would also not appear cluttered, either in its own right or in comparison to what currently exists. Indeed, these would help to break up the mass of the roof slope. In this regard, they would not be harmful features. I have not been provided with any details of previous permissions but based on what is before me I am satisfied the impact of rooflights would not be significant.
11. The visual impact of the development would also be highly localised. The dwelling is not visible from the entrance to Leabank Close and thus it is not a prominent feature from the main road. The alterations would mainly be visible from the private views of neighbours or visitors to the cul-de-sac and would not be visually intrusive or unsympathetic to the street scene. The impact from the increased variety of roof forms would not be significant.
12. The dwelling would also remain an unobtrusive feature in the SHCA and have no harmful impacts on any of the features that give the conservation area its

significance. This includes important views, the layout of the area or the quality of the built environment.

13. I therefore find that the development would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of both the host dwelling and the SHCA. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), Policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), policies DM1 and DM7 of the Harrow Development Management Policies document (2013), the Harrow Residential Design Guide (2010) or the Sudbury Hill Conservation Area Management Strategy (2009). Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development responds positively to the local and historic context and do not cause harm to designated heritage assets.
14. The Council has referred to the emerging London Plan in the decision notice. Given its stage of preparation, I can give this plan significant weight and I am content the development would not conflict with policies D1 and HC1. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure development complements the character of the area and does not cause unacceptable harm to the significance of heritage assets.

Other Matters

15. Concerns have been put forward in relation to previous applications and permissions on the site. These are outside the scope of this appeal. Nevertheless, I am content that replacement of the balcony with rooflights would have no harmful effect on the living conditions of neighbours.

Conditions

16. I have considered the suggested conditions from the Council in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard condition which limits the lifespan of the planning permission, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. I have also imposed a condition requiring the materials used to match those of the existing dwelling. This is necessary in the interests of local character and appearance.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

S J Lee

INSPECTOR