



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 February 2021

by A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3262838
4 Julius Caesar Way, Stanmore HA7 4PZ

- 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 and Mrs Shah against the decision of London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2298/20, dated 7 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing conservatory, single storey rear extension first floor side and front extensions, porch extension, garage conversion, alterations and insertion of new windows/doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing conservatory, single storey rear extension first floor side and front extensions, porch extension, garage conversion, alterations and insertion of new windows/doors at 4 Julius Caesar Way, Stanmore HA7 4PZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/1261/20, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) Notwithstanding details appearing on the approved plans, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby approved shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans; D084_A_103 Rev P01, D084_A_104 Rev P01.
 - 4) Windows in the proposed development which are located in the side (flank) walls at first floor level shall be obscure-glazed and non-opening up to 1.7m high above the internal floor level.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr and Mrs Shah against London Borough of Harrow. This application will be the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

- whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt for which no special circumstances exist
- and
- the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a detached dwelling situated within a residential estate of large houses. The proposed development includes a number of changes to the front elevation, a single-storey rear extension and a two-storey side extension which expands the existing side dormer on the southwest side to the full depth of the original house. The Council indicate that the proposal increases the volume of the dwellinghouse by 19%.

Green Belt

4. The appeal site lies within a significant area of built development washed over by the green belt. The Framework guides that proportionate additions to buildings in the green belt may be considered appropriate and therefore requiring no test of harm to openness or the demonstration of very special circumstances. An addition of one fifth to existing built volume is reasonable and proportionate even to an already large dwelling.
5. Although detached, 4 Julius Caesar Way, like many of its neighbours, occupies almost the full width of its plot consequently the proposed side extension would tend to reduce visual separation from its neighbour (No.6 Julius Caesar Way) above ground floor level when viewed from the street. The Council suggest that this causes harm to openness of the green belt; I disagree. Even if the proposed increase in built form were considered to be disproportionate, the actual effect on openness of the green belt from the proposed extensions will be very limited. This is due to the visual containment of the proposed extensions by the height and depth of surrounding houses, of the host dwelling and the already-eroded openness arising from the surrounding residential development.
6. I therefore conclude that the proposed development is not-inappropriate development in the green belt and that, in consequence, no conflict arises with Policy 7.16B of the London Plan (2016), Policy CS1.F of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012) and Policy DM16 of the Harrow Development Management Policies. Taken together these seek to protect the openness of the green belt, and the purpose of including land within it, from inappropriate development.

Character and appearance

7. The distinctive character and appearance of the built form in the area of the appeal site is achieved through the application of a limited palette of materials and a range of traditional architectural treatments. These are employed in dwellings of varying layout to create visual interest in the street scene. The rear elevations of the properties are of less significance in that regard.
8. Although the side extension combined with the additional front gable and other elements introduce additional visual mass, this of itself need not indicate harm to the overall character and appearance of the dwelling, area or street scene.

9. The existing asymmetric appearance with one substantial decorated gable survives in the proposal by the introduction of a similarly-decorated but smaller gable rising from the inner garage. The vertical form and nominal forward setting of this gable creates a visual break with the side extension and retained (albeit non-functioning) garage door. Arguably, the introduction of the front gable as an emphatic, but visually consistent feature both enhances the distinctive character of the dwelling and reduces the visual impact of the side extension by making it appear subordinate to the main bulk of the host dwelling. This would accord with design guidance. Overall, and noting other elements of the proposed development, I find that the scheme of alterations and extensions coherently support and sustain the character and appearance of the dwelling, street scene and area.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would accord with Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan (2013) and the Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD (2010). Taken together these seek to achieve a high standard of development that protects local character and appearance. Having so concluded I find no conflict with Policy 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan.

Conditions.

11. In addition to the usual implementation condition it is necessary to define the plans in the interests of certainty. I concur with the Council's suggestion of a condition for obscure glazing to new windows on the flank walls to protect neighbour amenity. A requirement that materials to be employed match those found on the host building is necessary to ensure the proposal fulfils the design objective and protect the visual amenity of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given, finding that the proposal accords with the development plan taken as a whole, I allow the appeal subject to the conditions.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR