

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 March 2021

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 April 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3263824

5 North Way, Pinner HA5 3NY

- 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 Rajiv Thiruchelvarajah against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application, Ref. P/3327/20, dated 16 September 2020 was refused by notice dated 11 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is a rear extension with sloping side roof to the boundary neighbour. Partial ground, first and roof front extension. New dormer to rear of existing roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed alterations to the first floor and roof at the front of the dwelling on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that North Way comprises detached and semi-detached dwellings with a variety of designs and external materials. The appeal dwelling forms one half of a semi-detached pair with No. 4, with each house appearing to have had the same original appearance, albeit handed.
 4. The main difference at present in the existing front elevations of the properties is that the appeal dwelling has had its integral garage converted into living accommodation, identified as a study on the submitted plans. I saw that No. 5 also has a side addition but given its modest size and recessed siting this is not conspicuous in views from the road.
 5. With few if any other alterations to the frontages of Nos. 4 and 5, the pair of houses essentially retain their original form. As a handed semi-detached pair, they display a particularly attractive balance and symmetry, with the positive contribution of their character and appearance to the street scene given further emphasis by the contrast with houses of a wholly different appearance on both flanks.
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6. The appeal proposal would infill the existing frontage recessed area at first floor and roof level, thereby effectively flattening out the principal elevation to North Way. These alterations, in particular the loss of the catslide roof, would in my view have an adverse effect on No. 5's character and appearance. Additionally, the attractiveness and character of Nos. 4 and 5 as a pair would be significantly harmed as a result of the imbalance and loss of symmetry.
7. I have carefully considered the grounds of appeal which amongst other matters argue that the variety of character and appearance in North Way enables a flexibility of approach; that identical extensions and alterations in North Way have already been permitted, and that the appellant has a fall back in the exercise of permitted development rights.
8. However, the presence of such variety does not lead me to conclude that where symmetry and balance make an important contribution to the street scene, as is the case here, its preservation is any the less important. Moreover, the examples of alterations provided in my view strengthen rather than undermine the Council's refusal. And the examples given of a fall back in the form of permitted development would not have the same extent of harmful impact as the unsympathetic proposals in this appeal.

Other Matter

9. The appeal proposal includes alterations and additions to the rear of the property and in part these have been the subject of neighbour objections. However, these do not form part of the application's notice of refusal and neither of the main parties to the appeal requested that I visit the rear of the property. I am not therefore in a position to consider these separately from the larger scheme and insofar as any permissions are required they will need to be pursued through a further application.

Conclusions

10. Overall, and having regard to all other matters raised, the proposed first floor and roof additions at the front of the dwelling would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.
11. This would be in conflict with development plan policies, including Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies 2013; the objectives and relevant policies in Chapter 3: 'Design' of the London Plan March 2021, and with Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
12. For the reasons explained above the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR