



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 May 2021

by Julie Dale Clark BA (Hons) DipTP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/20/3265811 7 Runnelfield, Harrow HA1 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 Mrs Harleen Sahni Mehta against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2184/20, dated 29 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of garage and erection of an attached two storey dwelling, together with car parking, landscaping, refuse and bike storage provision.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing garage and erection of an attached two storey dwelling, together with car parking, landscaping, refuse and bike storage provision at 7 Runnelfield, Harrow HA1 3NY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/2184/20, dated 29 June 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dwelling hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:-
 - *Drawing Nos; - PD201 Rev A; and PD202 Rev A.*

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue is the effect of the proposed dwelling on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a detached house at the end of a cul-de-sac. The area is a residential one characterised by detached houses. No 7 has a large flat roofed garage alongside the house. From the cul-de-sac there is a public footpath which runs alongside No 9 and close to its rear boundary. No 9 is fenced so its garden is not visible from the footpath. There is a notable drop in land levels from the top of the road towards the bottom of the cul-de-sac.

4. The 2016 London Plan and the 2019 Draft London Plan have been superseded by the 2021 London Plan¹ and Policy D3 emphasises a design-led approach to new development. Core Strategy Policy CS 1² establishes that growth in Harrow will be managed in accordance with the Spatial Strategy which directs development to specific parts of the Borough. It also indicates that proposals that would harm the character of suburban areas and garden development will be resisted. The Council's SPD on Garden Land Development³ establishes a presumption against garden land development in Harrow in order to ensure that the Borough's housing growth is delivered in accordance with the spatial strategy.
5. The proposal would involve the demolition of a large garage and whilst the ground floor area of the proposed dwelling would not significantly differ from that of the garage, it would result in the sub-division of the plot to create two dwellings. The proposal would create a modest two-bedroom dwelling on two floors set back from the front elevation of the house. The proposed dwelling would not be clearly visible when travelling down the cul-de-sac and so its impact on the wider area would be limited. It would be most noticeable when viewed from the end of the road, especially given the different styles of the two chalet style houses at the head of the cul-de-sac.
6. The proposal would entail off-street parking in front of both the existing and the proposed house and the loss of a garage for No 7 but the area in front of the house is already hardsurfaced and used for parking with no defining front boundary wall, fencing or vegetation. The proposal would retain a reasonable sized garden to the rear of No 7 and the proposed house would also have a rear garden for private amenity space. A rear access would be retained on the opposite side of No 7 and the proposed house would include provision for bin storage to the rear of the house.
7. Although the planning application form describes the development as the erection of an attached two storey dwelling, the decision notice describes it as a two storey side and rear extension to form a new attached dwellinghouse. The Council's delegated report assesses the proposal as if it were an extension in terms of considering design issues. In particular its width and proportion in relation to the existing house which the council consider is excessive and disproportionate. Whilst the proposal would be attached to the existing house, it is clearly not designed as an extension but as a new dwelling, albeit attached to the existing one. The proposal would in effect create a pair of semi-detached houses with the new house having a lower ridge height and being a smaller unit of accommodation.
8. In addition to the policies quoted above, the Council's Design Guide SPD⁴ also advises on design referring, amongst other things, to pattern of development; local character; the space around buildings; and scale, massing and form. The proposed dwelling would be of similar width and design to the existing house although it would have a lower ridge and be shallower in depth. It would result in the loss of the spaciousness around the existing house and introduce a semi-detached house in a cul-de-sac of detached houses. However, it would not

¹ Mayor of London The London Plan – The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, March 2021.

² Harrow Core Strategy February 2012.

³ Harrow Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document Garden Land Development, Adopted April 2013 (SPD).

⁴ Design and Layout Guidance for New Residential Development 4 – Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD (undated).

erode the overall character of the area where in some instances there is only modest spacing between dwellings. No 7 has a particularly wide space to the side, as does the house opposite, but these do not generally reflect the rest of the cul-de-sac.

9. The presumption against garden development as set out in the Council's SPD aims to ensure that the Borough's housing growth is delivered in accordance with the spatial strategy. I have no evidence that this dwelling would compromise that strategy. I do not consider that it would conflict with the aims or objectives of the policies and SPD's referred to and overall, I do not find that it would be of a scale, design or have an impact of sufficient harm to withhold planning permission.
10. No conditions have been suggested by the Council in the event that I allow this appeal although the appellant has indicated matters where conditions would be acceptable. In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance⁵ I consider that a condition requiring the materials to match the existing dwelling is necessary in order to achieve a satisfactory appearance. Also, for the avoidance of doubt, I consider that the development should be constructed in accordance with the submitted plans. I shall impose a condition accordingly.
11. This is an urban area and I have no reason to believe that an appropriate drainage scheme could not be incorporated during construction. No specific details for the requirements of a potential condition relating to drainage has been submitted and so I do not intend to impose a condition. Also, whilst the description of development includes bin and bike storage and bin storage is shown on the plans, I consider that there is adequate space to accommodate them without the need for a condition, especially as no specific conditions have been suggested by the Council. Landscaping is referred to in the description of development and the submitted plans indicate limited areas for landscaping. Given that this proposal is for one dwelling, I do not consider that a detailed condition is necessary. Again, one has not been suggested by the Council. Given the scale of this proposal, its location and the details submitted, I do not consider that further conditions are necessary.
12. I have considered all matters raised including housing provision, sustainability and the National Planning Policy Framework⁶ together with the objections raised by neighbours. However, none of the matters raised alters my conclusion. I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, it would not conflict with the above policies and therefore the appeal is allowed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance, Published 6 March 2014 – Last Updated 23 July 2019.

⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019.