

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 August 2021

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 September 2021

Appeal Reference: APP/M5450/D/21/3274678
5 Hilltop Way, Stanmore HA7 3DB

- 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 S Day against the decision of Harrow Council.
 - The application (reference P/0427/21, dated 2 February 2021) was refused by notice dated 9 April 2021
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a “first floor side extension with pitched roof”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a “first floor side extension with pitched roof”, at 5 Hilltop Way, Stanmore HA7 3DB, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference P/0427/21, dated 2 February 2021), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Main issue

2. In this case, the Council have acknowledged that the appeal proposal together with previous additions amount to “proportionate additions” to the original dwelling and no conflict with Green Belt policy is raised in principle. I accept that this is clearly the case and that this is not a main issue in the appeal.
3. Thus, the main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

4. Hilltop Way is a short residential cul-de-sac, within the northern edge of the built-up area of Stanmore. It is characterised by substantial two-storey houses, closely spaced around the cul-de-sac with small front gardens that are mainly given over to parking. There is also some on-street parking pressure. The houses are generally traditional in character, predominantly with hipped roofs, although there is some variety in design, including gables in some instances.
5. Number 5 Hilltop Way has previously been altered and now has a gabled main roof (with a box dormer on the rear slope), while the adjoining house of the

semi-detached pair retains a hipped roof form. Alongside the main two-storey part of the house at number 5, a single-storey element with a flat roof has been built up to the side boundary, which is at an angle to the house. On the front elevation, the external walls are mainly finished in a white painted, textured render.

6. It is now proposed that a first floor extension should be added above the side element, extending the two-storey structure. This new addition would be inset from the side boundary by a small amount and would be finished with a hipped roof on an irregular footprint.
7. Policies in the Development Plan are aimed at protecting and enhancing the environment generally. The general aim of achieving good standards of design derives, in particular, from Policy D3 of 'The London Plan' (dated March 2021), Policy CS1 (especially at B and K) of the 'Harrow Core Strategy' (dated 2012) and Policy DM1 of the 'Harrow Development Management Policies' (dated July 2013).
8. The Council's 'Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide' (which was adopted on 15 December 2010) is also relevant, although it does not have the same force as Policies in the Development Plan.
9. Among other things, national planning policies (as set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework') also continue to emphasise the importance of achieving good design and they make it plain that new development should be sympathetic to its surroundings. The recent revisions to the 'National Planning Policy Framework') do not fundamentally affect these basic planning principles, in the context of this appeal.
10. The proposed side extension would be irregular on plan, adapted to the angle of the historic boundary (leaving an inaccessible space in the centre part of the additional structure). It would be constructed under a hipped roof in two sections. The larger part of the roof would be located towards the front of the building, however, and the projecting rear section would have only a limited visual impact on the streetscene. Moreover, the new first-floor extension as a whole would be set back from the front elevation of the existing house and a new pitched roof would be added over the front part of the existing flat roof, integrating it better into the overall composition. Although the street frontage would be more closely built up, the finished building would not be out of keeping with its surroundings.
11. The materials to be used in the proposed extension would match the external wall finishes and roof tiling of the existing building and the traditional style would be maintained. Evidently, the new hipped roof would sit alongside the existing gable but there is a variety of roof styles to be seen in the vicinity of the appeal site. The disparity would not be so great, in my view, as to have a seriously harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings. The more complicated part of the new roof would be set well back from the front elevation and it would not have a major visual impact. Indeed, the existing dormer has only a limited visibility from the road in spite of its ungainly form.
12. The proposed extension would provide additional bedroom space at number 5 Hilltop Way and, although the internal layout would be somewhat awkward

because of the geometry of the original plot, the project would provide a useful addition to the house. At the same time, I have formed the opinion that the finished building would not be unduly bulky nor would it be an unattractive feature in the streetscene. The scheme as a whole would not be discordant with its surroundings.

13. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and I am convinced that the benefit of improving residential accommodation at the appeal site outweighs the design criticisms that have been made. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle, and I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted, subject to conditions. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations (including reference to flood risk), I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
14. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal).
15. Standard conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained. In addition, the council have suggested that a condition should be imposed to prevent the insertion of new windows or doors in the side elevation of the extension that is hereby permitted, in order to safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring residents. Although such a change seems unlikely, I accept the need for such a condition, for the avoidance of doubt, and I have imposed it, accordingly.

Roger C Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - drawing number 064/EX/001 (Location Plan);
 - drawing number 064/EX/002 (Site Plan);
 - drawing number 064/EX/101A (Existing Ground + First Floor);
 - drawing number 064/EX/102A (Existing Attic Floor + Roof);
 - drawing number 064/EX/120 (Existing Elevations);
 - drawing number 064/PR/201N (Proposed Ground + First Floor);
 - drawing number 064/PR/202I (Proposed Attic Floor + Roof);
 - drawing number 064/PR/220D (Proposed Elevations).
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.
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted in the side (south) elevations of the extension hereby permitted without the express written approval of the local planning authority.