

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2021

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/21/3277925

27 Rufford Close, Harrow, HA3 8UX

- 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 Bela Sonecha against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1303/21, dated 28 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with dormer; front 1m fence and change of living room window to same width French doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a modern two storey end of terrace dwelling. It is located in a residential area.
 4. Rufford Close comprises a cul-de-sac characterised by the presence of terraces of modern two storey dwellings of very similar appearance. Dwellings are of brick and tile construction and have simple porches that face onto short front garden areas. Dwellings have longer gardens to the rear.
 5. During my site visit, I observed that only minor alterations/extensions to dwellings are visible along Rufford Close. Consequently, the street's roofscape is unbroken and Rufford Close has a strong and attractive sense of uniformity. Whilst front gardens are only short, built development does not tend to intrude into them and this provides for a pleasant sense of spaciousness, openness and greenery - attributes that are further enhanced by the absence of boundary walls or fences, such that the gardens are open to the pavement.
 6. The proposed front dormer would introduce a built feature not seen anywhere else on Rufford Close. In doing so, it would break up the otherwise unbroken roofscape, leading the proposal to appear as an alien feature. The scale and siting of the dormer would result in it appearing as an unduly dominant and
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prominent feature and I find that this would exacerbate the harm arising by way of incongruity.

7. Further to the above, the proposed boundary fence and replacement of a window with French doors would also introduce incongruous features that would serve to draw attention to themselves as visually intrusive additions. The proposed fence would introduce a sense of enclosure that would detract from the area's identified open and spacious qualities; and the proposed French doors would be unlike and jar with the regular appearance of neighbouring dwellings and detract significantly from Rufford Close's uniform qualities.
8. Given all of this, I find that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the Framework; to London Plan (2021) Policies D1 and D3.D; to Core Strategy¹ Policy CS1.B; to DMP² Policy DM1 and to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide (2010), which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

9. In support of her case, the appellant draws attention to other dormers in the wider area. However, these relate to different streets elsewhere, none of which share the same identified qualities as Rufford Close. Notwithstanding this, I have found that the proposal would result in significant harm and this is not a factor outweighed by the presence of other forms of development elsewhere.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Reference: Harrow Core Strategy (2012).

² Reference: Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan (2013).