



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2022

by Eleni Randle BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/21/3286115

5 Rosecroft Walk, Pinner, HA5 1LJ

- 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 the London Borough of Harrow Council.
 - The application Ref P/2508/21 dated 14 June 2021 was refused by notice dated 11 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is single and two storey side extension; front porch; external alterations (demolition of attached garage, side bay window and chimneys).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have utilised the Council's description of the development as per the decision notice as I feel it more concisely describes the development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwellinghouse.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a two-storey detached dwelling located on a corner plot with elevations facing both Rosecroft Walk and Lawrence Road. At the time of my site visit I note that the dwelling is accessed from, and therefore fronts, Lawrence Road with the side elevation facing Rosecroft Walk. The existing dwelling benefits from symmetrical barn gable roofs which are equal in length and centrally positioned within the elevations facing Lawrence Road and 3 Rosecroft Walk. The existing roof form I find to have a strong symmetrical appearance and notable roof features when viewed within both the streetscenes of Rosecroft Walk and Lawrence Road respectively.
5. There are several elements to the appeal proposal as outlined with the development description at the start of this decision letter. The Council's assessment confirms that they find, in isolation, the ground floor side extension (the single storey element) is acceptable in terms of both the dwellinghouse itself and the wider area. I have no reason for refusal based upon the front porch and find, from the plans before me, this element would also be acceptable in terms of design. The refusal reason is specific in its reference to the proposed two storey side extension. I note the appellant contends that residential amenity is a main consideration, however, this does not form part of

the Council's basis for refusal and I have dealt with this in other matters later within this decision letter. This appeal will, for the avoidance of doubt, focus upon the two storey side extension in terms of character and appearance of the host dwelling for these reasons.

6. The proposed two storey side element would be set in from the side boundary by around a metre which would I find maintain space around the building at first floor level. Despite this, in order to accommodate this extension it would result in the removal of the existing barn style roof which I found, at the time of my visit, to be a notable symmetrical feature when approaching the property as well as removal of features such as the chimneys. I note the assertion that the roof features are not original and that this symmetry is only present due to an extension granted permission in 1999. I have no details of this planning permission (other than the application number), nor what was original prior to these alterations, before me within this appeal. I therefore have no evidence to support the claimed level of previous alteration to the original symmetry or roof form.
7. Despite this the property as it stands today was granted permission in excess of twenty years ago. The property as it stands before me is, therefore, I find well established in terms of its current character and appearance. In the absence of further information this is the only basis upon which I can assess the impact of the proposal. The flat roof, attached, garage is of basic design but is of such a scale that I do not consider it so detrimental to the property that its removal or replacement is necessarily needed to enhance the current situation. Notwithstanding this, as noted above, the single storey elements of the proposal have in isolation been considered acceptable in terms of both the dwellinghouse and the wider area.
8. The two storey extension would infill the area in front of the side projecting barn gable and would extend the gable further, closer to the boundary. I find that this would be highly prominent in the street scene and would imbalance the appearance of the dwellinghouse when viewed from Rosecroft Walk. This would result in a proposal which would be an incongruous feature, which would result in a loss of symmetry and unique roof features currently found at the property which would imbalance the appearance of the appeal site as a result of the roof form.
9. In addition to this issue I also note that the eaves of the two storey side extension would exceed the height of the original dwelling by 0.2m. Whilst the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD) is noted as being guidance, the proposal is contrary to this advice as it fails to maintain the original eaves height or present as a subservient addition to the host dwelling when viewed from Rosecroft Walk.
10. Examples of extended and altered properties are noted within the appellant's submissions but no further information such as consents or plans have been submitted as evidence to define the level of alterations or prove their lawfulness in planning terms. This limits the weight which I can apply to them and, in any case, each case should be considered on its own merits. Notwithstanding this the photographs included, on pages 11 and 12 of the appellant's statement, are of properties which I find are not comparable in terms of character or appearance, or plot siting, to the appeal site.

11. Overall, the appeal site is located prominently within the street scene and is slightly higher, in site levels, than neighbouring 3 Rosecroft Walk due to the road sloping up gently towards Lawrence Road. The site levels I find to add to the proposed eave height appearing even more dominant and inappropriate as a result of the proposed built form being closer to the boundary providing a more direct contrast in height between the properties. This, combined with the loss of existing roof form as the property currently stands as well as a loss of symmetry, I find to result in unacceptable design which would be to the detriment of the outward visibility qualities of the dwellinghouse itself as well as the sum of all the qualities which distinguish it from other properties within the area.
12. I do not find the proposal is development which reflects local design policies or Government guidance on design, nor does it take into account guidance within the supplementary planning documents for the reasons outlined. The proposal would be contrary to Harrow Core Strategy 2012 Policy CS1 (B) which requires that extensions respect their host building and Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan 2013 Policy DM1 which requires proposals to achieve a high standard of design and that proposals which are detrimental to local character or appearance will be resisted.
13. The proposal would also be contrary to London Plan 2021 Policy D3 (D (1 and 11)) which require development to enhance local context with due regard to existing building types, forms and proportions and to respond to existing character by identifying special and valued features, the overarching objectives of section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which seeks to ensure developments add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to the surrounding built environment and guidance within the SPD as a material consideration.

Other Matters

14. I note third party comments submitted as part of this application from the owner/occupier of 3 Rosecroft Walk. I have dealt with matters relating to character and appearance as a main issue within this decision. Loss of light, overshadowing, visual impact and flooding/drainage are raised however the Council have considered these matters in detail within pages 5 – 6 of their delegated report. Having reviewed this assessment I have no evidence before me to conclude differently and I do not find there would be grounds to refuse the proposal based upon matters relating to residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
15. The guttering of the proposal is within the appeal site boundary. Party Wall matters and maintenance agreements where required are private matters and not a material planning consideration within this appeal. Structural matters are separately controlled by Building Regulations.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons outlined above, and taking account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Eleni Randle

INSPECTOR