



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: 4TH April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/21/3288970

18 Wakehams Hill, Pinner, HA5 3BQ

- 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 Marius Ranasinghe against the decision of the London Borough of Harrow Council.
 - The application Ref P/3282/21 dated 30 July 2021 was refused by notice dated 29 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey front and side extension with bay window at front; alterations and extension to raise garage roof height; single storey side to rear extension to attached garage; first floor side to rear extension; two rear dormers; three rooflights in front roofslope; external alterations.
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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 impact of the proposal upon the original dwellinghouse and character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is two-storey detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area. The site is located on a corner plot and I noted, at the time of my site visit, that Wakeham Hill slopes away from the appeal site to the East which results in the corner plot being visually elevated and exposed, within the context of the streetscene and road level, when viewed from the East. I find that the properties within the immediate area surrounding the appeal site are not entirely uniform but, whilst there are some variations in character, I find that the properties do share a similar design queues as well as a similar palette of materials with generally consistent and uniform eave and ridge heights when viewed in terms of their individual elevations.
5. There are multiple elements to the proposal, as listed within the description at the start of this decision letter. The Council's delegated report confirms that, in isolation, the two separate rear dormers would be acceptable. No issues appear to have been raised with regard to the proposed bay window. Based upon the information before me and my site visit I have no evidence or reasoning to conclude differently on these elements in isolation.

Single storey front extension and single story side extension

6. The proposed single storey front extension would have a hipped roof with a maximum height of 4.5m. The proposed side to rear extension would result in a brick wall the full length of the site, following the line of the site boundary, which is at an angle, and with a maximum height of 3.85m reducing to 2.6m at the rear. The roof of the front extension has been hipped in order to reduce the height of the extension, however, in doing so the hipped roof contrasts with the remainder of the proposals and appears awkward. The roof form of the front extension, due to conflicting splayed roof forms, would result in a contrived development out of keeping with the prevailing character of the area.
7. The proposals would extend the entire length of the plot taken from the front building line and would add substantial bulk along the side boundary. This would materially impact the property compared to the existing built form on site which is a modest flat roof garage, and lower brick walling at the front which is stepped in from the side boundary and back creating space between that and the boundary. I do not find that a marginal step in, to allow for planter space, to the rear extension would overcome or reduce the impact of massing which would be at the flank wall and wrap around the host building at ground floor level.

First floor side to rear extension

8. Corner properties within the locality do have generally space to the boundary at first floor level. I find that the introduction of a first floor extension at the site, to almost the full width, would close the characteristic gap which currently contributes to a feeling of openness around the site. The setback of the front of the first floor extension, at 0.6m for a depth of 1.2m, from the side boundary makes the proposal appear contrived as a result of the splayed side elevation which follows the angled boundary.
9. I find the proposal to be a poor design and one which is utilised due to the sloped angle of the side boundary. This setback would not compensate sufficiently for the overall scale of the proposed first floor extension when viewed from the streetscene within which the property is already elevated due to the general site levels. The proposal would result in a dominant extension which would subsume the proportions and scale of the original dwellinghouse itself regardless of the size of other dwellings within the area.
10. The step to the front elevation of this extension results in two different eaves height, with the deeper recessed section having a much higher eaves than main dwellinghouse when viewed from the front elevation. This is of relevance this this would appear visually conspicuous from within the streetscene from a design aspect regardless of the heights of neighbouring properties. The differing eave height I find would exacerbate the poor quality of the overall design of this section of the roof and that of over the ground floor front to side extension. I do not find that the proposal is one which presents as a contrasting modern design.
11. The continued flank wall to the rear element would be contrary to the Supplementary Planning Document Residential Design Guide 2010 (SPD) which requires rearward projections on corner sites to be set in by 500mm from the side wall and a further subordinate roof to ensure an appropriate form of scale of development. Whilst the proposal does show a subordinate roof to the rear

element, this does not reduce the overall harm which would be as a result of the continuous flank elevation of the side to rear extension and the poor roof design of the combined extensions as previously outlined.

12. The combination of proposals I find, particularly when viewed from the proposed left hand side elevation, would result in an untidy combination of extensions which would subsume the original dwellinghouse and fail to respect its proportions, scale or character. Whilst the character of the area is mixed I did not see any design elements comparable to that proposed before me. In addition, the front elevation presents as overly cluttered and busy due to the combination of roof forms and rooflights this would have a detrimental impact upon the outward, visible qualities of the area.
13. Whilst I acknowledge that to some extent design can be subjective it should generally be consistent with relevant guidance including, but not limited, that contained within the SPD. Whilst this is guidance it is a material consideration within the determination of this appeal. The appellant's statement makes reference to other plans having been passed for extensions in the same area, however, no specific examples have been included in relation to this point and in any case each case must be considered on its own merits based on the evidence before me.
14. I note that reference is made to the size of other properties, including 16 Wakehams Hill, and whether or not they may be larger as claimed I do not find they are located in a comparable location to the appeal site before me which is in a prominent corner plot. In addition the relative roof heights of 18, 16 and 14 Wakehams Hills are, I find as a result of the progressive slope of Wakehams Hill as previously noted within this decision. This is both appropriate for the site levels as well as a product of the properties starting from differing slab/floor levels as a result of the aforementioned slope.
15. I note the appellant's inclusion of extracts of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework) within their statement. For the reasons outlined above I do not find the proposal would add to the quality of the area, is visually attractive as a result of good architecture nor sympathetic to local character as required by paragraph 130 of the Framework. It should also be kept in mind that whilst the Framework is a material consideration it does not change the status of the Local Plan which is the starting point for determination in accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. There are no material considerations before me to depart from the Local Plan policies stated within the refusal reason.
16. The proposal would be contrary Harrow Core Strategy 2012 (CS) Policy CS1.B which requires all development to respond positively to the local context in terms of design and that extensions respect their host dwelling and Development Management Local Plans Policies 2013 Policy DM1 which states that proposals which fail to achieve a high standard of design or which are detrimental to local character and appearance will be resisted.
17. The proposal would also be contrary to London Plan 2021 (LDN) Policy D3.D(1) which states that development should in terms of form and layout, enhance local context by delivering buildings and that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their scale, appearance and shape and LDN Policy D3.D(11) which requires proposals to respond to the existing character of a place.

Other Matters

18. The appellant has made reference to the behaviour of the Council and the treatment of the application. This is not a consideration which falls within this appeal and I have considered the appeal based upon its own merits based upon the evidence before me. A lack of harm with regard to the amenities of any adjoining or nearby properties in terms of daylight, privacy or outlook is noted but this does not outweigh the harm which I have identified in relation to the main issue as outlined above.
19. Reference is made to 8 Wakehams Hill, however, no details have been provided. Reference is made to a photograph of this property however this appears to have been omitted from the appendices to the appellant's statement. I cannot therefore attribute any weight to this within the consideration of this appeal.
20. Garden Land Supplementary Planning Document is referenced; however, a copy of this document has not been submitted before me as part of this appeal. This, alongside, CS Policy CS1.B may allow for certain redevelopment and infill developments, however, the proposal before me is for an extension to a host dwelling and not a proposal for infill development or garden land development in that sense. In any case proposals would still need to be appropriate for the character and appearance of the area within which they stand.

Conclusion

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

Eleni Randle

INSPECTOR