



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2022

By A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27TH July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P1945/D/22/3297142
25 Moor Lane Rickmansworth WD3 1LE

- 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 F Rizvi against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref: 21/2696/FUL dated 23 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is part single, part double storey first floor rear extension with internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development differs between the application form, the decision notice and stated grounds of appeal. However, the description given on the application form sets out the matter being appealed which I have determined on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area

Reason

4. No.25 Moor Lane sits within a row of large detached houses on the outskirts of Rickmansworth. Accessed from a residential service road which is parallel to, and on the north side of, the A4145 (also called Moor Lane at this point) the setting of the appeal site is, otherwise, of rural land between settlements. In the section of Moor Lane where the appeal site is found, an older, high brick wall largely screens all but the roof and upper storey of the twentieth-century housing behind it.
5. As is clear in the images provided by the appellant, although the high front boundary wall, with hedge, would largely prevent views into the site from the access road and pavement, my observations are that the distinctive roof forms of No.25 and those of similar design have greater prominence as a result of this partial screening of the ground storey.
6. Whilst the wider street scene is characterised by this and a broad consistency of materials and roof forms, the design of No.25 and several other houses in

the row share an unusual and architecturally distinctive approach which has evolved from 'Arts and Crafts' influences. The combination of unusually steep sloping roof surfaces leading to a prominent and horizontal ridge line with plain and semi-hipped gables, rendered walls and traditionally detailed tile roofing, together with a prominent stepped chimney with tile-creased detailing to the principal façade, make a markedly original contribution to the street scene and local identity.

7. Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy 2011 (Core Strategy) and Policy DM1 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document 2013 (DMPLDD) seek a high standard of design that conserves the character of an area, in general alignment with the objectives for sustainable development set out in the Framework, and (with appendix 2 of the DMPLDD) seek to ensure that alterations and extensions to dwellings maintain local distinctiveness and respect the form and character of the original building.
8. The proposal would involve significant rebuilding of the upper storey in order to create a deeper first floor area and this is surmounted by a crown roof 'cap' and intersecting ridges from the existing and added gables sitting above a ridge. In that regard, whilst I note the supporting information provided by the appellant, the lowered ridge line is of no consequence. The drawings show a shallow slope on the crown roof which, to my mind, is visually incompatible with the form of the existing roof which is generated by a shallow first floor plan area.
9. The effect of the increased building bulk would therefore be to dilute the strident arched roof form which is the dominant design element of No.25 and those of the same design nearby. Furthermore, although shown in the same colour, the drawings provided do not demonstrate how the design would be implemented in terms of the finish of the crown roof in comparison with the existing steep roof surfaces that are laid with plain clay tiles. The result of the proposal would likely be the use of differing surface materials which would highlight the incongruity of what is proposed and draw attention to, rather than subsume, the extent of change proposed.
10. The rear extension and other alterations to the ground floor have little impact beyond the site area, but the proposal makes some changes to fenestration in the roof. A prominent dormer on the front elevation would be enlarged, and the insertion of a new gable at the rear with larger glassy openings would replace shallow dormers which, by their modest size, acknowledge the dominance of the roof form. Noting other insertions to the side elevations, these changes would cumulatively dilute the original design approach such that the result would substantially undermine the visual coherence of the roof form and thereby add to the identified harm to the character and appearance of the building. For the reasons set out, this would undermine the distinctive contribution made by No.25 to the street scene.
11. The appellant has also provided a number of examples of altered dwellings in the locality of the appeal site. Many of these do not share the distinctive architectural form of No.25 and are not a basis for precedence. Although works to No. 13 Moor Lane have similarities with the proposed development, the increased depth of the dwelling did not result in a visually intrusive crown roof 'cap' sitting above the ridge line. Similarly, the example of No.19 Moor Lane demonstrates how cumulatively the character and appearance of a very

similar dwelling has been degraded by change noting the lost half-hip to the front gable. Examples given of dwellings with a pyramid crown roof (No.27 and No.29) have different, more mundane, design origins which are not shared by the proposal and are not, to my mind, an arguable precedent.

12. Consequently, for the reasons set out, the proposal would conflict with the relevant policies I identify and therefore conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. Taking all matters raised into account, the appeal does not succeed.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR