



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2022

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12TH August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/22/3297509

2 Temple Mead Close, Stanmore HA7 3RG

- 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 Shah against the decision of Harrow Council.
 - The application Ref P/0120/22, dated 12 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is a rear dormer roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. According to the Council's delegated report, the host property received planning permission for a rear dormer in March 2021 (Ref: P/4509/20), although neither party has provided me with the details of that scheme.
3. I also observed on my visit that, contrary to the submitted 'existing elevations', there is currently a rear dormer on the property. However, in none of the documents before me is the appeal scheme described as a retrospective proposal to retain the existing development. I also observed slight fenestration differences between the submitted 'proposed elevations' and the development as built. I have therefore dealt with this appeal as a proposed rear dormer as depicted on the submitted drawings.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - the living conditions at 36 Gordon Avenue, with particular regard to privacy and overlooking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010 ('SPD') sets out that roof alterations and dormer windows should complement the original street character and should not dominate buildings or impair their proportions. It continues that they should appear subordinate, and at paragraph 6.70 states that to ensure visual containment they should be set in from gable ends, and set up from the eaves, by at least 1 metre.

6. The host property occupies a long and narrow corner plot at the junction of Temple Mead Close and Gordon Avenue. It is a largely symmetrical, well-proportioned and cohesive building, with a hipped roof, and which sits amongst houses of varied style and design.
7. The proposed dormer's side walls would be sited beyond the ends of the host's ridgeline, its half-hipped roof would be set only slightly down from the host's ridge, and it would be much less than 1 metre above the eaves. As a result, the dormer would have a considerable bulk and it would occupy most of the property's rear roof slope. Its siting, scale and proportions would give the resultant dwelling an awkward, 'top heavy' appearance. Although it would be faced with matching materials, that harmful impact would be exacerbated by its windows, which would be larger than those in the floor beneath.
8. Given its rearward siting, nearby tall trees, and its relationship with other buildings, including 36 Gordon Avenue ('No 36'), the scheme would only be partially visible in the Gordon Avenue streetscene, but it would also be seen from nearby gardens. In those views, and for the above reasons, it would have a discordant appearance and it would dominate the host property.
9. In broad terms, London Plan 2021 ('LP') Policy D3, Harrow Core Strategy 2012 ('HCS') Policy CS1.B, and Harrow Development Management Policies 2013 ('HDMP') Policy DM1 require a high standard of design which respects the host building, and that responds positively to local character, with regard to matters including scale, shape, bulk and proportions. The National Planning Policy Framework ('Framework') also sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. For the reasons above, the scheme would conflict with those policies, and with the advice in the SPD.

Living conditions

10. The appellant has pointed out that two of the dormer's three windows could be obscurely glazed. The clear glazed central window, which would serve the bedroom and would be sited near the landing, would broadly face the roof and flank wall of No 36.
11. A degree of overlooking is commonplace in built-up areas such as this, and given that this window would be sited very high up on the building and would have a limited outlook, I am satisfied that the scheme would not harmfully impact the living conditions at No 36 as a result of significant overlooking or a significant loss of privacy. Consequently, on this matter, the scheme would not conflict with those parts of LP Policy D3, and HDMP Policy DM1 which aim to achieve a high standard of privacy and amenity.

Conclusion

12. I have found that whilst the scheme would not harmfully impact living conditions at No 36, as it would not represent good design it would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. The scheme would conflict with the development plan and, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR