



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/22/3300877

81 Balmoral Road, Harrow, HA2 8TE

- 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 Desiree Moncrieffe against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0554/22, dated 18 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a hip to gable loft conversion and a rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, end of terrace set amongst a row of similar style and aged properties along Balmoral Road. The property has previously been extended to the side at two-storey, up to the common side boundary with No 79, and with a flat roof over. The proposal would project the original dwelling's roof over the extension, converting its form from a hip end to a side gable. It would also include a 'box-like' dormer to the rear extending across the full, extended width of the property.
4. The Council's *Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide 2010* (SPD) contains detailed guidance for roof alterations. It states that the preferred form of roof alteration to a terraced house is the extension of a hipped roof to form a gable with the addition of a rear dormer window but that dormers should generally be subordinate features with the retention of a clearly visible section of roof around the sides in order to visually contain them within the profile of the roof. To achieve this a rear dormer must be: set-in at least 500mm from a shared (party) boundary with an attached house; set-in at least 1000mm from the gable end; and set-back at least 1000mm from the roof eaves measured externally along the roof slope.
5. The SPD supports the principle of a hip-to-gable change to accommodate a subordinate rear dormer but only to the original roof of a terraced dwelling.

Paragraph 6.72 reinforces this where it states that where a loft conversion is provided as part of a two-storey side extension, a single rear dormer across the whole width of the extended house may be unduly obtrusive.

6. I saw during my visit that a number of properties along Balmoral Road have hip-to-gable changes. Most properties in the street do not have space to the side to accommodate a two-storey side extension so in this regard No 81 is mostly unique. Nevertheless, as part of a wider terrace, the elongation of the property, including at roof level with a gabled end, would not be entirely out of keeping with the character of the area which has evolved. The change would merely reflect others in the street scene, and one that is broadly supported in principle by the SPD.
7. On the other hand, the size of the dormer would be in direct contradiction of the Council's guidance. Although the side addition already exists, the full width of the dormer would be dependent upon the sideways extension of the original property. Due to the enlarged roofspace that would be available and utilised, I find that the dormer would appear as a large and obtrusive adjunct, and due to the uniquely extended width of the appeal property, much larger and bulkier than most others in the area. It would further conflict with the SPD by failing to be set in a reasonable distance from the gable end or up from the eaves and thereby able to achieve a satisfactory level of visual containment. The proposed dormer would be openly seen from the rear gardens of surrounding properties to be of a size and type the SPD explicitly advises against.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to a case at 55 Arundel Drive where planning permission was given on appeal (Ref APP/M5450/D/19/3225424) for what is allegedly the same type of development. However, I have no knowledge of the background or circumstances to this case and am unable to draw direct comparison with the current appeal proposal which, in any event, has been considered on its own merits.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given, I find that, due to the size of the rear dormer, the proposal would be intrusive and detrimental to the visual qualities of the area. By failing to achieve a high standard of design that would respond positively to the character of the local area without harm, the proposal would conflict with Policy DM1 of the Council's Development Management Policies 2013, Policy CS1 part B of the Harrow Core Strategy 2012, and Policy D3 of The London Plan 2021. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR