
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2023

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/22/3311837

Briardene, 38 Cuckoo Hill, Pinner, Harrow HA5 2AJ

- 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 Mrs Anousheh Mireskandari against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/3156/22, dated 4 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a hip to gable loft conversion in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/3156/22, dated 4 September 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the following approved plans: KTD.99 and KTD.01.
 - 2) The second floor level side window shown on approved drawing KTD.01 shall not be glazed or reglazed other than with obscure glass and shall be non-opening unless the parts of the windows which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor level on the second floor.

Preliminary matters

2. I saw at my site visit that the proposed development has largely been carried out, so that the proposal is retrospective. Although not specified in the description of the proposal set out on the application form (as quoted above), the development includes a box dormer window structure on the rear roof slope and 2 rooflights at the front, all as shown on the submitted drawings.
3. The appeal application followed on from the refusal of a previous application which sought to show that the roof extension was permitted development so that a planning application would not be required. That other refusal is not before me. My consideration here relates only to the appeal against the refusal of the planning application.

Main issue

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

Reasons

5. Briardene sits at the end of a short row of hipped roof semi-detached houses in a mixed residential and commercial area. A modest 1 and 2 storey extension has previously been added to the side. The proposed hip to gable and box dormer extension has been added to provide accommodation in the roof space.
6. The Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (RDG) advises that roof alterations and dormer windows should complement the original street character and should not dominate buildings or impair their proportions or character. It says that rear dormers should be subordinate features in the roof, set in at least 0.5m from the party boundary, set in at least 1m from the gable end and set back at least 1m from the eaves.
7. The hip to gable extension is relatively small in scale. It does not conflict with the much lower previous extension or over-complicate the roof form. The proposed dormer window would be much closer to the gable and the eaves than is advised by the RDG, so that it does take up most of the rear roof. It is visible in angled views from Cuckoo Hill, but the main views are from Rickmansworth Road to the rear. This type and scale of extension is, however, not unusual. Importantly, in views from Rickmansworth Road it is seen in the context of a very similar hip to gable extension and box dormer window just 2 doors down. In this specific visual context, I consider that the proposal does conform to local character and is not visually harmful.
8. On the opposite side of the road is a locally listed row of Victorian terraced houses, Camden Row. The proposal is not readily seen together with those houses and does not detract from their settings.
9. Although the extension does not comply with some of the RDG's guidelines, I conclude that it does fit in reasonably well with the prevailing pattern of development in the area and does not harm local character or appearance. It accords with the shared aims of London Plan 2021 policy D3, Harrow Core Strategy policy CS1(B), Harrow Council Development Management Policies policy DM1, the RDG and the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure that development responds to the existing character of a place and achieves a high standard of design including in relation to massing, bulk and scale.
10. As the external development has been carried out satisfactorily, using matching materials, there is no need for the usual conditions requiring a start within 3 years and specifying external materials. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty. A condition requiring obscure glazing of a new side window is also necessary to protect neighbours' privacy.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR