The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 July 2023

by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15TH August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/23/3321153
39 Northolme Gardens, Edgware, Harrow, HA8 5AY

- 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 Koshik Kerai against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
- The application Ref P/0082/23, dated 10 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 7 March 2023.
- The development proposed is erection of single and two storey side extension, single and two storey rear extension, first floor side extension, alterations to roof, rear dormer, two rooflights in front roof slope and external alterations including demolition of attached garage and rear extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the first floor elements of the proposed side and rear extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwellinghouse, the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a traditional semi-detached house set on the corner of Northolme Gardens and Broomgrove Gardens. Both streets and the surrounding locality are characterised by similar semi-detached dwellings on generous plots, giving the area a feeling of openness. A significant number of dwellings have undergone extension and alteration. The appeal dwelling currently has single storey side and rear extensions comprising a part brick, part prefabricated single garage, and brick built side and rear extensions. The former is set in from the boundary behind a close boarded fence. The latter side extension extends up to the rear edge of the footway. It is proposed to demolish the existing garage and rear extension.

4. The Council raises no objection to the demolition of the existing structures which I agree are of little architectural merit. Neither is any objection raised to the single storey elements of the proposed extensions or the roof alterations, dormer and rooflights. I agree these would be acceptable in the context of the

host dwelling and the street scene. I shall therefore restrict my further consideration to the first floor elements of the proposed side and rear extensions.

5. The proposed first floor side extension would occupy the full width of the gap between the original dwelling and the footway. Behind that, a two storey rear extension some 3m deep is proposed. This would be set in some 0.5m from the footway. I agree with the Council that, in the context of the host dwelling, the side extension would be proportionate and well designed. I am further satisfied that the first floor rear extension, despite its width, would sit comfortably with the dwelling as a whole and would not appear excessive in the context of the host dwelling.

6. Nevertheless, I share the Council's concerns that the two storey side extension which would have no set in from the street, when taken as a whole, would appear as a stark and unsympathetic feature in Broomgrove Gardens on this prominent corner plot. The effect would be emphasised by the majority of dwellings in Broomgrove Gardens being set back from and facing towards the street. Despite the proposed set in of the first floor element of the rear extension, the additional length of blank wall, close to the street edge would exacerbate the detrimental visual effect, resulting in an overly dominant and incongruous form of development that would detract from the openness of the street scene. Moreover, the extensions would conflict with guidance set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, Residential Design Guide (SPD), 2010, which expects two storey side extensions on corner plots to be set in 1m from the site boundary and for adjoining rear extensions to be set in by a further 0.5m

7. The Appellant has drawn my attention to a number of other examples of two storey side extensions on corner plots in the locality, including an example allowed on appeal (APP/M5450/D/18/3193157) and one on the opposite corner of Northolme Gardens and Broomgrove Gardens. I have limited evidence regarding the circumstances of these examples. However, in some cases I saw that the extension is restricted to the depth of the original dwelling and in others, including the appeal example, there is a noticeable set back from the street, mostly with a boundary fence or wall, which softens the effect. I therefore find that they are not readily comparable with the more extensive and prominent appeal proposal which I have, in any case, judged on its own merits.

8. It is concluded on the main issue that the first floor elements of the proposed side and rear extensions would, owing to their combined depth and proximity to the street, have a materially detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host dwellinghouse, the street scene and the surrounding area. In consequence, they would conflict with Policies D3.D 1) and 11) of the London Plan, 2021, Policy CS1 B of the Harrow Core Strategy, 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework and the SPD. Taken together and amongst other things, these expect new development to be of a high quality of design such that it is visually attractive as a result of good architecture and layout, sympathetic to local character and enhances the local context through having regard to bulk, scale and height in relation to the location.

9. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, including that the semi-detached pair has been extended to the side, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K E Down
INSPECTOR