

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 13 October 2023

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 November 2023

Appeal A Ref: APP/M5450/D/23/3323579

15 Flambard Road, Harrow, HA1 2NB

- 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 Sunil Radia against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/0792/23, dated 16 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is alterations to roof; front and rear dormers; rooflights in rear and both side roof slopes; external alterations
-

Appeal B Ref: APP/M5450/D/23/3327238

15 Flambard Road, Harrow, HA1 2NB

- 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 Sunil Radia against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1610/23, dated 2 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 27 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is alterations to roof; front and rear dormers; rooflights in rear and both side roof slopes; alterations to front porch; front entrance canopy; external alterations (demolition of front porch).
-

Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to roof; front and rear dormers; rooflights in rear and both side roof slopes; alterations to front porch; front entrance canopy; external alterations (demolition of front porch) at 15 Flambard Road, Harrow, HA1 2NB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/1610/23, dated 2 June 2023, subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary and procedural matters

3. Since they more accurately describe the appellant's proposals, I have used the description of the proposed development seen in the Council's decision notices rather than those in the original application forms.

4. As the descriptions of the proposed developments imply, both schemes are comprised of several elements. All the elements are separately considered in the officer reports on each application both in terms of design and possible effects on neighbouring amenity.
5. The Council raises no objection to most of the elements, and I have no reason to disagree with the Council's assessments in this regard. The Council's concerns relate solely to the front dormer proposed in each case, and this aspect forms the basis of the only reason for refusal used in both decision letters.

Main issue

6. Having regard to the above, the main issue in both appeals is the effect of the proposed front dormer on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

7. The appeal property is a substantial detached dwelling. When I visited it was vacant and secured by timber security screens on the site frontage. It stands in a lengthy street displaying distinct suburban characteristics comprised of a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings.
8. Apart from its reliance on development plan policies directed to design, the Council also refer me to the guidance on roof alterations and dormers set out in its SPD¹. The guidance provides that front or side dormers '*can be objectionable*'. This does not, to my mind, mean that all front dormers are necessarily objectionable as a matter of principle, since as the guidance also points out, '*consideration will be given to the type of roof, the scale of proposals, and the character/appearance of the house and those adjacent*'. Thus, a subjective assessment is called for having regard to the listed criteria.
9. As the Council points out, none of the dwellings in the street display front dormers. However, the appellant observes, and the Council concurs, that many of the detached dwellings in the street show different characteristics in terms of their design and appearance, and several have been modified since being built. Roof designs are varied, and many features project above eaves level, punctuating roof lines when viewed from the street.
10. The dormers proposed were designed with a view to marrying with the form of the prominent twin gables at the front of the property. However, the dormer subject of appeal A is far larger than that subject of appeal B. Such is its size and bulkiness that in my opinion it would dominate the roof, resulting in the host property becoming perceived as top-heavy, materially harming its character and appearance, and that of its surroundings.
11. The dormer subject of appeal B is more modest in scale and would be seen as subservient and proportionate within the overall mass of the roof. It would also be sited at a relatively low level so that in oblique views along the street, most of the structure would be screened by the projecting front gables on

¹ Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Residential Design Guide (2010) paragraphs 6.66 % 6.67 in particular.

either side. It would have far less of an impact than the dormer subject of appeal A and would sit acceptably in its visual context.

12. I therefore conclude that the proposal subject of appeal A would harm the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with those provisions of policies 7.4B & 7.6B of The London Plan, policy CS1 B of the Harrow Core Strategy and policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Local Plan Policies, which, in combination, require new development to be of a high standard of design, respectful of local architecture and character, and for house extensions to respect their host buildings.
13. On the other hand, I find that the scheme subject of Appeal B complies with the thrust of these development plan policies, and this appeal succeeds for this reason.

Conditions

14. In respect of Appeal B, the Council's suggested conditions regarding materials and that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans shall be imposed in the interests of visual amenity and certainty respectively.

Other matters

15. I have taken account of all other matters raised in the representations, including the references to the *National Planning Policy Framework*, and the appellant's references to what are regarded as broadly similar development in this and adjacent streets. I give these examples little weight since I am not aware of all the circumstances surrounding those cases. I have therefore determined the appeals on their individual merits having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.
16. No other matter is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions in respect of Appeal B

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
2. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: the location plan and Drawings Ref 8164527-04-1100 Rev A; 8164527-04-1200 Rev A; 8164527-04-3100 Rev A; 8164527-04-3200 Rev A & B-8164527-04-3000 Rev A.