



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2023

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 14.12.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/23/3324442
227 Whitchurch Lane, Edgware HA8 6QT

- 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 Cohanim Architecture against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/3230/22, dated 19 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is a ground and first floor extension and alterations to a single dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene.

Reasons

3. The proposed development includes the erection of front, rear and side extensions to a semi-detached dwelling situated at the junction of Whitchurch Lane and Donnefield Avenue. By reason of its siting at a road junction, the side and rear elevations of the property are as equally prominent as the front elevation within the streetscene. Around the junction there is a change in character from a predominantly residential area to a more mixed area with some commercial uses grouped around the Underground station.
4. Along Whitchurch Lane several dwellings have been altered, primarily by the erection of side extensions. However, there are also variations in the size and design of porches. Some of the extended porches now overlap with bay windows but their detailed planning circumstances have not been provided and, for this reason, this appeal has been assessed on its own circumstances.
5. The scale and design of the proposed alterations would change the character and appearance of the host property with Council's objection being focused upon the proposed front porch and the alterations to the fenestration of the property. Although there is some use of timber detailing associated with bay windows, most of the surrounding dwellings are characterised by rendered walls and tiled roofs. The combination of its bulk, the fenestration and the timber detailing indicated on the drawings would make the proposed side elevation visually conspicuous within the streetscene along both Whitchurch

- Lane and Donnefield Avenue. By reason of size and design, the proposed side elevation would be an incongruous addition which would visually dominate the enlarged property.
6. The proposed porch would be associated with the side extension and alterations to the bay window. Although permitted development rights are referred to by the appellant to erect a porch, there are no details of what could be erected and, for this reason, this element of the appeal scheme has been assessed based upon its own planning circumstances.
 7. There is guidance contained in the Council's *Harrow Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) referring to porches not linking into, and have clear separation from, existing bay windows. The proposed front extension would create an overlap between the porch and the bay window. The proposed porch would also project forward of the bay window. The combination of the overlap with the bay window, the degree of forward projection, the fenestration and the timber detailing would cause this element of the appeal scheme to unacceptably unbalance the character and appearance of this pair of semi-detached dwellings.
 8. Part of the appeal scheme includes the reconfiguration of the parking provision which the Council claims would increase the area of hardstanding and reduce the green landscaped areas within the curtilage of the property. There are already extensive areas of hard landscaping associated with the parking areas to the front and rear of the property and a patio area adjacent to the rear elevation.
 9. Based upon the observations made and the more detailed calculations provided by the appellant the degree of change to the proposed hardstanding area would not be significant. The appellant claims that the hardstanding would increase by circa 10sq m and the green landscaped area reduced by about 2sq m. Based upon the observations made during the site visit and reviewing the drawings, the proposed changes to the to the extent of the hard and soft landscaped areas would not be a reason for this appeal to fail. However, this matter does not outweigh the unacceptable harm which has already been identified.
 10. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene and, as such, it would conflict with Policy CS.1B of the Core Strategy and Policy DM 1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan. Amongst other matters, these policies require development to be of high-quality design which is not detrimental to local character and appearance and for extensions to respect their host buildings. Policy D3 of The London Plan is more particularly directed at optimising site capacity through a design-led approach rather than being a detailed development management policy for householder extensions.
 11. For the reasons given, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR