

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2024

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30.01.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/23/3331760
75 Christchurch Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LZ

- 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 M Raja against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2043/23, dated 13 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side to rear extension; rear dormer; two rooflights in front roofslope to create habitable floorspace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located in a residential area characterised by the presence of similar two storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings set back from the road behind short parking areas.
 4. The appeal property is situated in a prominent location, at the junction of Christchurch Avenue with Bradenham Road. It has a flat-roofed single storey extension to the side, albeit its front elevation has a lean-to roof which connects to the dwelling's front porch.
 5. The side extension projects to the edge of pavement such that it sits well forward of the build-line of dwellings along Bradenham Road to the rear and during my site visit, I noted that the rear of the appeal property appears prominently as one travels along Bradenham Road towards Christchurch Avenue.
 6. The similar appearance of dwellings in the area derives in part from the common presence of tiled roofs, bay windows and front gables, single-storey side extensions, the prevalence of white rendering and a sense of rhythm
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afforded by the setting back of dwellings and the regular presence of gaps above ground floor level between pairs and rows of dwellings.

7. This results in a notable sense of uniformity which is further enhanced by a significant degree of symmetry apparent between pairs of dwellings and in the case of the appeal property, between it and its neighbouring dwelling on the opposite side of Bradenham Road, Number 73 Chistchurch Avenue. Like the appeal property, No 73 has a single storey, flat-roofed side extension which projects to the edge of the pavement along Bradenham Road.
8. Whilst I observed during my site visit that many dwellings have been extended and/or altered, such changes tend to appear in keeping with host dwellings and their surroundings and consequently, tend to appear to the benefit of the area's uniform qualities. I also noted during my site visit that the gaps between buildings referred to above combine with the presence of gardens, parking areas and street trees to provide for a sense of greenery and spaciousness.
9. The proposal would result in a tall, two-storey extension rising immediately above the pavement along Bradenham Road. The absence of any set-back from the pavement would, I find, result in the extension failing to appear as a subservient addition. Rather, it would appear as an unduly large, bulky and imposing feature.
10. Further to the above, the proposal would serve to erode an important gap above ground floor level at the entrance to Bradenham Road from Christchurch Avenue. As well as detract from the area's spacious qualities, the proposal would harm the significant sense of symmetry that currently exists between the appeal property and No 73 and this in turn, would be detrimental to the uniform attributes of the area.
11. Further, the harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the prominent location of the appeal property, whereby the detrimental impacts of the proposal would be widely visible from the surrounding area.
12. In addition, the proposed dormer extension would be large and would occupy a vast part of the appeal property's rear roof-slope. Furthermore, it would only be set in slightly from the shared party boundary. Together, these factors would result in the creation of a large and bulky dormer extension that would appear as an unduly dominant feature on the rear roof-slope.
13. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the combined impacts of the proposal as a whole would result in it drawing the eye as an intrusive and incongruous development, especially when seen from Bradenham Road.
14. Given all of this, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to London Plan Policy D3 and D11; to DMP¹ Policy DM1; to Core Policy² CS1; and to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide (2010), which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

¹ Reference: Harrow Development Management Policies (2013).

² Reference: Harrow Core Strategy (2012).

Other Matters

15. The appellant, in support of the proposal, draws attention to other planning decisions and other appeal decisions elsewhere. However, none of these are for the same form of development under the same set of circumstances as the appeal before me. Notwithstanding this and in any case, I have found that the proposed development would result in significant harm and this is not a factor that is altered or mitigated by other decisions relating to other development proposals elsewhere.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR