



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

by **C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1540/D/24/3353305

27 Priory Avenue, Harlow, Essex, CM17 0HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Isabella Green against the decision of Harlow District Council.
 - The application Ref is HW/HSE/24/00293.
 - The development proposed is described as 'extension and modification as stated of existing domestic home'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on, firstly, the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and, secondly, the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property lies in an area of diverse character, where I saw that many properties have evidently been altered and extended. This includes at roof level, where single storey buildings have had roof extensions. The appeal property is evidently one such building, where there is a very steep mansard to the front elevation with a flat roof, whilst to the rear there is a sloped roof above a single storey rear projection. The property sits between dwellings of different form and appearance.
4. The proposed works would see the property extended to the rear by a full width two storey addition. This would have a flat roof that continues from the existing flat roof. I acknowledge that a number of properties in the area have been extended to the rear at first floor, and that in absolute terms the depth of the extension may be comparable to changes seen in the area, but it is the design and form of the extension that is objectionable. The altered house would appear as a very blocky form, with a flat roof that extends deep into the site. This undesirable appearance would be heightened by the fact that the front of the property is already square-like in appearance due to the mansard and flat roof.
5. Harlow Garden Village Conservation Area adjoins the appeal site. There is sufficient distance from the dwelling and the location of the extension from that

Area to ensure there is no effect on the setting of the Conservation Area, and intervening mature vegetation further limits any effect.

6. However, the extension would be readily visible from Priory Avenue, and in those views the undesirable appearance of the extended house would be seen. I saw at my site visit there are clear views of side elevations of other properties, and these form part of the character of the area. I further saw that, where other buildings have been extended at roof level and to the rear, care has been taken to ensure the roof form incorporates design details such as gables, pitched roofs and dormers. No such architectural detailing is incorporated into the appeal scheme, which leads to an unacceptable blocky form of development. The resulting house would appear incongruous to the area and seriously harmful to the character of the area.
7. Policy PL1 of the Harlow Local Development Plan (2020) requires all development to, amongst other matters, have a design rationale based on an understanding and analysis of local context and character, and to respond to the local character, as well as responding to the scale, height, massing and architectural detailing of the area. The proposals would not meet these policy requirements, and so on the first main issue I conclude there would be harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Living conditions

8. The rearward extent of the existing building, and the sloped roof down to the single storey height, leads to the property sitting comfortably between the two neighbours. The proposed extension, rising to a full two storeys with flat roof and to the depth proposed, would be imposing on the outlook from those adjoining properties. The overbearing effect caused by the height, depth and design of the extension would have an unacceptable impact on the outlook and, as a consequence, the living conditions of existing occupiers.
9. This would be contrary to Policy PL2 of the LDP, which requires development proposals to have regard to, amongst other matters, the effect on aspect, outlook, overbearing, and the perception of enclosure. On the second main issue I therefore conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.

Conclusions

10. The conflict with the development plan on both main issues means the appeal is dismissed.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR