



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: 9 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1540/D/24/3347065

10 The Sweyns, Harlow, Essex, CM17 9BL

- 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 Mr Yusuf Chaudhri against the decision of Harlow District Council.
 - The application Ref is HW/HSE/24/00029.
 - The development proposed is described as erection of front render finish.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property has been extended to the front and rear by single storey extensions, and the proposed development is to render the elevations of these and the existing property. I saw at my site visit that, although there have been alterations to houses along The Sweyns and the erection of outbuildings, there remains a good degree of uniformity that derives from the form, scale and – importantly – the predominant use of brick as a material. The front elevations are clearly visible from public views. These matters mean the row of houses retains a distinctive appearance, which contributes to a consistent character to the area.
4. The rendering of the appeal property would notably upset this character. By rendering the ground and first floors – which would be one half of a pair of semi-detached houses where the adjoining property remains brick – there would be a discordant and obvious anomaly in the existing street scene. 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, to protect local distinctiveness, and to respond to the architectural detailing and materials of the surrounding area. The proposal does not demonstrate these objectives have been adhered to, and so would not meet these policy requirements.
5. On the main issue I therefore conclude there would be harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

6. The appellant states that rendering would be more desirable than brick for various reasons including durability, fire resistance and maintenance. There are countless brick buildings in the country and I am not aware of such buildings suffering such drawbacks. Furthermore, the appellant has not provided me with detailed evidence to support the claims that the render on this particular building is specifically required instead of bricks. I therefore attach very little weight to such claims.
7. Whether the elevations are render or brick would have no effect on the size of the house, and so I do not attach any weight to the appellant's submissions regarding the need for the development on the grounds of their desire for living space.
8. My conclusion therefore remains the same, and the conflict with the development plan means the appeal is dismissed.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR