
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2025

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/24/3356713

1 Cotman Gardens, Edgware, Harrow HA8 5TE

- 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 Divyakant Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow
 - The application reference is PL/1767/24.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of a single storey side extension, double storey side and part rear extension (with dormers), small front extension to garage and internal alterations at 1 Cotman Gardens, Edgware HA8 5TE.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. While the appellant has described the proposal as in the above heading, the Council has referred to it as a first-floor side to rear extension. From my inspection of the plans, I consider that the Council's description more accurately reflects the development sought. I have assessed the proposal on that basis.
3. On 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework 2024) was published. The Framework 2024 does not raise any new matters that are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached building that occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Cotman Gardens, Mollison Way and Waltham Drive in an area of mixed character. Close to the site, I saw that buildings vary in design, size and general appearance and that some properties had been extended and altered. There is, therefore, considerable variety to the existing built form within the street scene and the local area to which No 1 belongs.
6. The proposal is to enlarge No 1 with a first-floor side to rear extension with a flat roof that would wrap around a rear corner of the host building. By extending across a significant part of the existing side and rear elevations, the proposal would be a sizeable addition. It could not reasonably be described as a subordinate feature in

the roof, which is generally expected of dormers in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Design Guide* (SPD). It would also be at odds with the SPD, which advises that dormers should not overlap or wrap around roof hips.

7. The SPD does not cover every eventuality and the advice within it should, in my view, be applied in the light of local circumstances, which can often vary from one site to another. Nevertheless, the SPD is a relevant consideration in this case.
8. From Cotman Gardens, the proposal would be seen alongside an existing side dormer with a flat roof. With 2 such features, each being significant in size and prominent in the street scene, the proposal would be a conspicuous and repetitive feature giving rise to a building with disproportionate bulk at roof level. As a result, the proposal would be obtrusive in the street scene and cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the local area even taking into account the varied built form within it.
9. I acknowledge that the size, shape and design of the new dormer would broadly mirror that of a similar feature in the side and rear elevations of the property that is attached to No 1. To my mind, this existing dormer exemplifies the harm to which I have referred. As such, it does not necessarily set a desirable example to follow even if it provides a counterbalance in the rear elevations of the pair. Therefore, the presence of a similar feature in the attached property does not lend significant weight to the appellant's case. While I saw that other properties included first floor extensions, including 104 Mollison Way, none were the same or very similar in design and scale to the proposal and so are not directly comparable with it. In any event, the appeal scheme has been assessed on its own merits.
10. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policy D3 of The London Plan, Policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy, Policy DM 1 of the Development Management Policies Document and the Council's SPD. These policies and guidance promote high standards of design and aim to ensure that development enhances the local context and respects the host building. The appeal scheme is also at odds with the policies of the Framework 2024 which, like its predecessor, states that development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.
11. In reaching this conclusion, I acknowledge that the appeal dwelling has no recognised architectural or historic merit and that the original building has been altered by previous extensions. I note that the footprint of No 1 would remain unchanged and that the appeal property would continue to occupy a good-sized plot with the new built form in place. These matters do not outweigh the harm that I have identified. I also note that the appellant had understood that the scheme had been informally agreed with the Council at the pre-application stage.
12. Overall, the development conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework 2024, which indicate that the decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane INSPECTOR