
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2016

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3155471

56 Scratton Road, Stanford-Le-Hope, Thurrock, SS17 0PA

- 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 D Edgley against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00197/HHA, dated 14 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two-storey side and rear extension at 56 Scratton Road, Stanford-Le-Hope, Thurrock, SS17 0PA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/00197/HHA, dated 14 February 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Dwg Nos: SL15-07121-01, SL15-07121-02, SL15-07121-03, SL16-02161-04 and SL16-02161-08.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building

Procedural Matters

2. The application was submitted in the name of Mr Milton. However it has been confirmed that this name was given erroneously as Milton is the appellant's spouse's maiden name. I am satisfied that this was merely an error by the applicant's agent and that the appellant and the applicant are one and the same person and I have recorded the name as given on the appeal form.
 3. The description of development was changed by the Council to make reference also to a loft conversion and the removal of a chimney stack. Both of these elements, including also the insertion of a rear facing dormer window and two dormers to the front, form part of the original application proposal and have been considered as part of this appeal.
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Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and upon the living conditions at 54 Scratton Road with particular reference to daylight and visual impact.

Reasons

5. The proposal would completely remodel the two-storey hipped roof form and appearance of this detached property. A new wing would be projected to one side and the ridge would be extended across the full width of the building with gables built up to each side. Small gabled dormer windows to each side of an existing two-storey forward projection would provide an overall pleasing symmetry to the front elevation.
6. The Council is of the view that existing gable features within the street scene look awkward in their setting and that the newly created gabled form of the appeal proposal would add further to this disharmony. I disagree. Although Scratton Road has a significant amount of two-storey, semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs, I detected no particular regimentation or uniformity to the street scene, which is interspersed with numerous other properties of alternative designs, including several bungalows and others with gabled elevations. Of all the gabled features I saw, none looked out of place but simply reflected an alternative domestic design within a residential setting. My overall impression was an area of mixed architectural styles with the appeal property being one of several others that is unique in its form and which already bears little resemblance to any other in the street scene.
7. Modification to No 56 would merely alter its unique form but not in such a way that would be disruptive to any important sense of unity along Scratton Road. The remodelled dwelling would sit comfortably in relation to both neighbouring properties and in relation to the wider, reasonably mixed, character of the area. As such, I find no conflict with the aims and objectives of Policies CSTP22 - *Thurrock Design* and PMD2 - *Design and Layout* and of the Council's Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development DPD (adopted as amended in 2015) which, amongst other things, require quality in design and for development to respond sensitively to the site and its surroundings.
8. To the rear a dormer would be added across a significant portion of the roof. The Council has no specific objection to its appearance or impact and I have no reason to disagree.
9. A single-storey extension is proposed across the whole width of the property and immediately adjoining the shared common boundary to one side adjacent to No 54. Annex A1 of the Thurrock Borough Local Plan, adopted in 1997, contains criteria relating to the control of development in residential areas. One of its general principles is that any extension must not be at the expense of a neighbour's enjoyment of their dwelling, particularly in relation to privacy and loss of daylight/sunlight. To achieve this the Annex goes on to state that a single-storey rear extension will normally be restricted to 3.3m projection on a party boundary.

10. At a depth of 4m beyond the existing rear elevation, the appeal proposal would exceed the Council's normal guidelines. However, the nearest flank wall to No 54 is set away from the common side boundary by the width of a driveway leading to a garage at the rear. The distance between the extension and the rear elevation to No 54 would ensure that the single-storey form of the development would have little, if any, impact upon daylight entering any habitable rooms. No 54 is positioned to the south-east of the appeal property so there would be no impact upon existing levels of sunlight. The extension would run along the boundary adjacent to the driveway and would have no overbearing impact upon any important garden or amenity area.
11. Overall, whilst there may be a breach of the Council's normal guidelines, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the living conditions which the guidelines seek to protect. There would therefore be no conflict with DPD Policy PMD1 - *Minimising Pollution and Impacts on Amenity* insofar as it seeks to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring occupants.

Conditions

12. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area it is necessary to ensure that the new works are carried out in materials to match the existing.
13. I have noted within the officer's report that the Council considers the three parking spaces shown on a Block Plan (parking) provided during the consideration of the application should be orientated perpendicular to the highway. The report suggests that this could be achieved by condition. However, I have no evidence to show that manoeuvring a vehicle into any of the spaces would not be possible, even if it could not be achieved independently in every case, or that in so doing there would be any harm to pedestrian or highway safety. Neither is there any evidence to suggest that if a vehicle is parked vehicle on-street as a result of this proposal it would have a harmful impact. I therefore see no need for a condition requiring an alternative parking layout.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the area. I also find that there would be no harm to the living conditions at 54 Scratton Road. I am satisfied that there would be no conflict with the development plan, or with the National Planning Policy Framework's core principle for always seeking high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Accordingly, the appeal succeeds.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR