

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by H Baugh-Jones BA(Hons) DipLA MA CMLI

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

Decision date: 18th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/16/3153878

81 Christie Gardens, Chadwell Heath, Romford RM6 4SD

- 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 Rajwant Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0706/16, dated 19 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "demolishing existing shed/garage. Proposed conversion of an existing 4 bedroom house with 2 storey extension of 81 Christie Gardens into a 2 No. 2 storey house. 1. 3 bedroom house. 1 2 bedroom house with a proposed double storey side and rear extension."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are (i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Christie Gardens street scene; (ii) whether it would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers with regard to outlook; and (iii) the effects on the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 83 Christie Gardens with regard to outlook

Reasons

Character and appearance of the host dwelling and effects on the street scene

3. The appeal property is an end of terrace dwelling set on a substantial, roughly triangular shaped plot within a relatively dense residential area. Dwellings in the street are of generally uniform appearance with front projecting two-storey gable bay windows that dominate the appearance of their street facing elevations, creating a strong vertical emphasis at regular intervals across the terraced groups. In combination with the regularly located gaps between the groups, this creates a clear identifiable rhythm to the street scene.
 4. The appeal property has already been substantially extended to the side over two storeys and by a single storey addition at the rear. The width of the proposed additional side extension would further increase the proportions of the dwelling. Whilst I recognise that it would be stepped back slightly, the cumulative effects of further increasing the dwelling's width would give it an unbalanced form. Furthermore, the proposed extension would have a flat roof, which would appear as an unsympathetic addition at odds with the prevailing
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hipped roof form common to end of terrace dwellings in Christie Gardens. The proposal would therefore harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

5. For the above reasons the proposal would also be an incongruous addition to the street scene. Moreover, the characteristic gaps between the dwelling and its neighbour would be reduced. I accept that the existing detached garage at the side of the appeal property already has some effect on this as does, what appears to be, a two-storey side extension next door. However, the existing garage is a modest single-storey structure and thus maintains a notable gap between the groups of terraces. In contrast, the appeal proposal would introduce built form at first floor level, which in my view would unacceptably diminish the existing gap and I do not accept that it would go largely unnoticed. Whilst I do recognise that this would only be discernable within the immediate vicinity of the site, this in itself is insufficient to militate against the reduction of the gap or, therefore, give credence to the proposal.
6. Taking all of the above into account, I consider that the appeal scheme would run counter to Policy BD5 of the Council's Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document (2008) (BWPP) that, amongst other things, seeks to ensure development complements the character of the host building. It also conflicts with BWPP Policy BD1 that requires, amongst other things, development to be designed to respect, and be compatible with its surroundings. The appeal scheme further conflicts with Strategic Policy 3 of the Redbridge Core Strategy (2008) (CS), the aims of which include a requirement for development to be designed to a high standard.

Living conditions – future occupiers

7. The terraced group, of which the appeal property forms part, is positioned at about 45 degrees to a right angled bend within Christie Gardens. As a result, the dwelling projects obliquely to the rear of the next door end terrace (No. 83). The consequence of this arrangement is that the appeal dwelling faces substantially towards the flank wall of No. 83 although the main front (bay) window does have a view of the street.
8. However, whilst this situation would be maintained for the current occupier, the only front window at ground floor level faces primarily towards a blank wall in relatively close proximity with only very oblique views possible towards the street. Consequently, No. 83's flank wall would be omnipresent in views from the living room window. I am not persuaded that the proposed opening in the internal wall between the living and kitchen/dining areas would be sufficient to give the sense of there being a dual aspect from front to back. Consequently, given that this window would be the only one serving the front living room, the outlook for the dwelling's future occupiers would be unacceptable.
9. The outlook from the front first floor room would be similarly poor. However, this would be a bedroom and thus, less likely to be occupied to the same extent as the main downstairs living areas. However, whilst I consider the level of harm relating to this room would be lower than that identified above, it nonetheless adds further weight to my overall conclusions on this main issue.
10. For the above reasons, the proposal would run counter to the overall objectives of CS Policy SP3. Although this policy does not refer specifically to the effects on future occupiers, it is clear from its supporting text that the design of

buildings is seen as a quality of life issue. In my view, this cannot be divorced from the harm I have found in respect of the unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers.

Living conditions of neighbours

11. The proposed extension would bring the side of the existing dwelling closer to the shared boundary with No. 83. I do not consider that the outlook from next door would unacceptably be harmed at ground floor level because of the position and height of the boundary fence. However, the proposed extension would appear more noticeable in the outlook from next door's upstairs rear room closest to the boundary. Nevertheless, it would not be in direct view and I do not therefore consider that this harm in itself would be sufficient to warrant withholding permission.
12. To conclude on this matter, I do not consider that the appeal scheme would conflict with CS Policy 3, the aims of which also include a requirement for development to respect the amenity of adjoining properties.

Conclusion

13. I have found that there would be no unacceptable effects on the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 83 Christie Gardens. However, this is substantially outweighed by the clear identified harm to the street scene, the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and the unacceptable outlook of future occupiers.
14. For the above reasons and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Hayden Baugh-Jones

Inspector