
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2016

by Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25TH October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/16/3152071
2 Fernhall Drive, Ilford, Redbridge IG4 5BN

- 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 Mrs Sofia Bhatti against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0024/16, dated 31 December 2015, was refused by notice dated 17 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new 2 storey 3 bedroom dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling.
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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 site is situated adjacent to a pair of semi-detached properties on the east side of Fernhall Drive. The host property has a sizeable side garden which, at the time of the site visit, was occupied by an attached side garage and separate garden shed. The predominant character of properties in the street is of large, well proportioned, semi-detached houses similar to the host property. However, many properties have side extensions or garages which have filled in the gaps between the original pairs of semi-detached houses. Furthermore, the topography of the locality means that the street slopes down towards Redbridge Lane West.
 4. The proposed dwelling would be attached to the host property and due to its position and the topography of the local area, it would be in a visible and prominent location within the streetscene, particularly when viewed from the Redbridge Lane West end of the street. The proposed self-contained house, alongside the existing pair of semi-detached houses, would form a terrace of three properties and would have three separate front doors visible from the street. As a result, it would unbalance the pair of semi-detached houses and the terrace properties would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of development in the area.
 5. The width of the proposed dwelling would be visibly less than that of the host property and its adjoining semi-detached property. I note that the width of the
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host property would also be reduced with the loss of the existing garage as a result of the proposal. This would have the effect of introducing a narrower width of plot into the streetscene which would be intrusive and create a cramped form of development. As a result, it would be out of keeping with the prevailing scale and form of development and would have an adverse effect on the overall appearance of the area. Such impact would only be exacerbated by the prominent and visible position of the proposal and the apparent change in level between the host property and the new dwelling due to the local topography.

6. I appreciate that there are several examples of development to properties elsewhere on Fernhall Drive which give the appearance of a terrace of properties resulting from the infilling of gaps between properties. However, those examples appear to be additions and alterations to their existing host properties. In contrast, the proposed dwelling would appear as a separate, self-contained dwelling from its host property. As a result, it would be out of keeping with the character of the area and the appearance of the streetscene.
7. The appellant argues that the proposal would bring a number of benefits, including reducing the risk of burglaries due to the removal of the side garden to the host property and providing an additional dwelling towards meeting local housing needs. Notwithstanding these, in terms of crime prevention, I find there to be wide ranging and more effective methods available to reduce crime, such as improved fencing and security lighting, rather than necessarily through the construction of a new dwelling. Furthermore, whilst the proposed dwelling may make a modest contribution towards meeting local needs, it must also be assessed against other factors such as its visual impact on the local environment.
8. I note the appellants' personal reasons for seeking approval for the proposal in relation to family needs and to the care of a family member. I acknowledge the importance of these matters to those involved. Accordingly, I have given them due weight in my decision making.
9. From all that I have seen and read, and having regard to the above matters, I find that the benefits put forward in support of the proposal would not be sufficient, either individually or cumulatively, to outweigh the harm I have identified.
10. Consequently, I conclude that due to its narrow width, its terracing effect and its relationship to its host property, the proposed development would appear cramped and out of keeping with the prevailing form and pattern of development. As a result, it would have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy SP3 of the Redbridge Core Strategy Development Plan Document and Policy BD1 of the Redbridge Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document. Amongst other matters, these policies seek to ensure that development is compatible with, respects and contributes to the distinctive character of its area and is of a style and design that is appropriate to the area.

Other Matter

11. I note in this proposal that the appellant has sought to address concerns raised in relation to a previous application on the appeal site, including changes to the roof design and setting back the dwelling from the side boundary of the appeal

site. However, whilst I acknowledge these measures and have given them due consideration, I must assess this appeal scheme before me on its own merits. Accordingly, I have determined this appeal on that basis.

Conclusion

12. Therefore, for the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McCormack

INSPECTOR