
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2016

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons), MSc(Dist), PgDip, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/16/3155658

5 Firs Walk, Woodford Green IG8 0TD

- 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 Gurmeet Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1777/16, dated 21 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as part single part double storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for part single part double storey rear extension at 5 Firs Walk, Woodford Green IG8 0TD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 1777/16, dated 21 April 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: 140505/L/111; 140505/L/114; 140505/L/111; 140505/L/112; 140505/L/113; 140505/L/115 and; 140505/L/110.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal are the effects of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property comprises a large two storey hipped roof house situated within a verdant suburban setting containing large properties set within extensive grounds. The property also has an extensive garden area to the rear which is well screened by mature trees from properties on Chestnut Walk and Warners Close.
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4. The property lies within the designated Woodford Green Conservation Area (CA). The CA is centred on a long green open space containing lines and clusters of mature trees and small ponds and other greens that give the area a distinctively semi-natural character and contributes to the area's significance. This is enhanced by the built form that displays a low density, low rise buildings set in areas of greenery. Single family homes set in sizeable gardens is characteristic of the area and collectively perform an important part in enclosing the open spaces and serving as a reminder of the gradual evolution of this area from its origins as part of the Forest of Essex.
5. In considering this proposal I am also mindful of the statutory duty which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas¹ and national policy which advises that great weight should be given to this objective².
6. The proposal would see both a single storey extension to the rear of the property as well as a two storey addition, which together would provide additional kitchen/living space at ground floor with additional bathroom and an en suite at first floor. The single storey extension would incorporate a sloping roof whilst the first floor would continue the hipped arrangement of the appeal property.
7. Redbridge Core Strategy Policy SP3 seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas through inter alia, ensuring that new development responds to local distinctiveness while respecting the amenities of adjoining properties. The Borough-wide Primary Policies through Policies ED3 in terms of conservation and built heritage and BD1 requires high quality developments that are compatible with the distinctive character of the area, building style and massing. In terms of extensions to properties more specifically, Policy BD5 as well as BD4 require proposals to complement the character of the containing building in terms of scale, style and form and which should be free of overlooking and privacy problems.
8. While recognising that the property has been previously extended in not a particularly sensitive way, the proposals themselves are restrained and well designed and follow the shape and original massing of the host property. The Council believes that alongside the existing large extension and, in combination, the proposal would now present an unacceptably large and visually dominating development overall which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. However in my view the proposed single and two storey extensions would tuck behind the existing large extension and would be well designed and compatible not only with the original design of the appeal property but also with the prevailing pattern of development locally.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would comply with the Council's policies described above and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA.

Other matters

10. Occupiers of neighbouring houses have raised the possibility that the proposal would result in the property being used as a house in multiple occupancy

¹ Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

² The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) paragraph 132

(HMO). However, there is no evidence before me that the property will not continue to be used as a single family dwellinghouse. The Council has not raised this as a material issue for consideration.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement of development, conditions are necessary identifying approved plans in the interests of certainty and a requirement that the development be built in matching materials in order to protect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. Having regard to the above reasons and to all other matters raised, this appeal is allowed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR