

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 January 2017

by M Seaton BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5750/D/16/3161963

110 Chandos Road, Stratford, London, E15 1TT

- 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 Ms Judy Wilkinson against the decision of London Borough of Newham.
 - The application Ref 16/01687/HH, dated 1 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a front porch.
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Procedural Matter

1. Since the determination of the planning application and prior to the receipt of this appeal, the Development Plan has been updated by the adoption and publication of the *London Borough of Newham Local Plan: Detailed Sites and Policies Development Plan Document* (the DPD) on 20 October 2016. As a result, saved Policy H17 of the *London Borough of Newham Unitary Development Plan*, which was cited in the Council's reason for refusal, has been superseded and no longer applies. Furthermore, whilst the Council also referred to Policy SP8 of the emerging DPD in the reason for refusal, the Council has confirmed that only minor changes were made to the policy which had no material impact on its relevance to the appeal proposals. I have therefore assessed the appeal on the basis of the up-to-date development plan, which includes the adopted DPD.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is comprised of a mid-terraced two-storey dwelling, with Chandos Road and surrounding streets close to the appeal site characterised by residential terraces of varying length, and set back from the road by front gardens. The terrace within which the appeal property is located is set comparatively further back from the road than the majority of other properties observed within the vicinity.
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5. The proposed development comprises a full-width porch to the front of the dwelling, extending 1.5 metres forward of the front elevation. The structure would possess a shallow pitched lean-to style roof and would be constructed from bricks and tiles to match those on the existing building, as well as uPVC double glazed windows and door.
6. I noted at the site visit that the introduction of a porch to individual dwellings is not without precedent within the wider area, with the neighbouring property at No. 108 Chandos Road also having a mono-pitch full width porch on the front of the property. Nevertheless, it was evident that the addition of porches to existing terraces of dwellings is by no means a prevailing characteristic within either the nearby streets of relatively uniform terraces or the wider area, albeit that there are a number of examples of porches where the proportions and detailed design of the additions appear complementary to the area and dwellings upon which they are situated. However, taking into account the varied designs and approaches exhibited in the vicinity, I am not persuaded that a full-width porch with lean-to roof would be a sympathetic design solution in the context of the character and appearance of the area or the host dwelling, or that such an approach would adopt a desirable precedent. I consider that the proposal would result in a substantial and disproportionate addition to the front elevation of the terraced dwelling.
7. The appellant has highlighted that the building is not listed and that it is not located within a conservation area. Furthermore, it is contended that the glazed nature of the structure would not intrude upon the existing design features at the front of the property. However, whilst I accept that the use of glazing above the dwarf brick wall would provide a generally lightweight and transparent appearance to the structure, it is inevitable that the existing design features would be obscured to a certain degree, albeit that I am mindful of the absence of any designation of the building or area as a heritage asset. I have also carefully considered the appellant's assertion that there is sufficient room to accommodate the porch to the front of the property. However, I note that the question of the availability of space did not form part of the Council's case and does not appear to have had any significant bearing on their decision, which has concentrated on the impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling and area.
8. On the basis of the submitted evidence, and my own observations of the site and area, the proposed porch extension would result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area as a consequence of its scale and detailed design. Nevertheless, I would conclude that there would not be conflict with Policy SP8 of the DPD, which seeks to ensure neighbourly development in respect of the specific design of the proposals in relation to environmental standards. Furthermore, I am also not persuaded that Policies S1 and SP2 of the London Borough of Newham Core Strategy 2012 (the Core Strategy) are of specific relevance to the proposals in the context of the reason for refusal, as they set out the spatial strategy and importance of healthy neighbourhoods respectively.
9. However, I have found conflict with regards to Policies S6, SP1, SP3 and H1 of the Core Strategy, and Policies 7.1, 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (consolidated with alterations since 2011 and published March 2016). These policies seek to require development to adopt the principles of high quality design whilst maintaining and enhancing

the positive elements, character and distinctive features of the borough, and reinforce positive local distinctiveness. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) as it would not represent high quality design.

Other Matters

10. I have had regard to the concerns of the neighbouring occupier regarding the impact of the proposed porch on existing levels of light available at the front of the property. However, whilst there may be some limited impact on existing levels of light available at the front of the property, I am satisfied that given the south-facing orientation of the front of the property, and the structure extending 1.5 metres from the front of the dwelling, that any impact would be acceptable in the context of available living conditions.
11. The appellant has raised a number of other issues and points related to the proposals. These include the benefits that the porch would provide in respect of safety and security, the additional light and privacy that would be available, and improvements to energy efficiency. However, I note that in all three respects, the claims which have been made regarding the improvements are anecdotal rather than supported by any compelling evidence on the basis of anti-social behaviour and crime in the activity, a general absence of light and privacy in the existing arrangement of the accommodation, or that the addition of the porch would make any significant improvements to existing levels of energy efficiency for the property. As a consequence, I have not attached any more than very limited weight to these matters in support of the proposals, which I consider would be insufficient to outweigh the harm identified in the main issue.
12. The appellant has also raised significant concerns over procedural aspects of how the planning application was addressed by the Council, and a general absence of assistance from the Council at the pre-application stage and during the course of the planning application. However, whilst I have regard to these submissions, I do not find that they are matters which ultimately are relevant to the determination of the appeal for the proposed development, for which in my decision-making I have concentrated on the material considerations placed before me by the main and interested parties.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Seaton

INSPECTOR