

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 4 January 2017

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 January 2017

Appeal A Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3163247

31 Chantry Crescent, STANFORD-LE-HOPE, Essex, SS17 0DN

- 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 Ben Riglin against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 16/00884/HHA was refused by notice dated 1 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as extensions to back of property together with modifications to roof including increase in height together with rear facing dormers to facilitate two additional bedrooms being within the roof space. Excavations within the ground to create a new basement room with raised patio area above. New front porch together with widening of the existing mono pitched roof at the front of the house. New wall to front of property with a maximum height of 1.2m due to sloping nature of the ground (average height circa 1m).
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Appeal B Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3163248

31 Chantry Crescent, STANFORD-LE-HOPE, Essex, SS17 0DN

- 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 Ben Riglin against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 16/01241/HHA was refused by notice dated 3 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as extensions to back of property together with modifications to roof including increase in height together with rear facing dormers to facilitate two additional bedrooms being within the roof space. Excavations within the ground to create a new basement room with raised patio area above. New front porch together with widening of the existing mono pitched roof at the front of the house. New wall to front of property with a maximum height of 1.2m due to sloping nature of the ground (average height circa 1m).
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Decisions

Appeal A Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3163247

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3163248

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

3. As set out above, there are two appeals which differ only in the detail of the design of the proposed extensions. Although I have considered each proposal
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on its individual merits, to avoid duplication I have dealt with the two schemes together in this document, except where otherwise indicated.

4. The descriptions of development in the heading above have been taken from the planning application forms. However, in Part E of the appeal forms different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that revised descriptions of development were agreed. Accordingly, I have used the descriptions given on the original applications.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the same in both appeals, and relates to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is located towards the end of a sloping residential cul-de-sac, with many of the dwellings sharing design characteristics and materials. As a result of the local topography, the roofline of the dwellings is not uniform, with the staggered height following the land levels. In some cases, due to the land slope there is a marked change in perceived height, but generally the dwellings are of comparable scale and form. This gives the cul-de-sac a sense of cohesion.
7. The appeal property sits centrally in a prominent group of three properties towards the end of the cul-de-sac. Unlike the more spacious pattern elsewhere, these three houses are closely grouped together. The appeal property and the dwelling to the south, No.29, are very similar in style and height, whereas No.31a appears as a more modest house which is lower in height. As No.31a is set further back from the roadside, there are clear views of the appeal property from the public domain across the open frontage.
8. Although the appellant advises that the proposal represents about a 30% increase in the footprint of the building, this is only one measure of gauging the resultant mass and bulk of the proposal. In both appeals, the depth and width of the proposed rear extension and the creation of rooms in the roofspace would result in a material increase in the height of the building. In appeal A, this would involve the creation of a 'crown' roof with a central flat section, and in appeal B a slacker roof pitch and raised eaves height would be used to replace the crown roof with a central ridge. Advice contained in Annexe 1 to the Thurrock Borough Local Plan 1997¹ is that the pitched roof of an extension should match and/or tie into the existing roof, unless there is some physical reason why this cannot be achieved. In these cases, it is the extent of the additions which would govern the roof form rather than any physical limitation.
9. Dealing firstly with appeal A, the overall size and scale of the proposed extensions would appear excessive relative to the original house, and the increased height and bulk of the building would appear incongruous and visually intrusive in its context. Although I accept that the street trees would provide some screening in summer months, at the time of the appeal site visit the appeal property was clearly visible in the street scene. Moreover, the position of

¹ Annexe1: Criteria Relating to the Control of Development in Residential Areas

the trees in front of No.29 rather than the appeal property would limit their screening effect, and the increased height and mass of the appeal building would be obvious from many vantage points. The siting of the appeal property forward of No.31a would enable the crown roof and the depth of the addition to be perceived from views across the open driveway and from the footpath to the north.

10. Whilst the revised roof form expressed in appeal B would omit the incongruous crown roof, it would not resolve the material increase in the height and scale of the building. The bulk of the roof would be less than that in appeal A, but the overall scale of the addition would nonetheless appear excessive in relation to the original house. Under both schemes, the resultant dwelling would appear out of keeping with the prevailing scale of buildings in the vicinity, and would conflict with the design aims of Policy CSTP22 of the Thurrock Core Strategy² (CS), which seeks to promote high quality design founded on a thorough understanding of, and positive response to, the local context; and with CS Policy PMD2, which amongst other criteria, requires all design proposals to respond to the sensitivity of the site and its surroundings and to contribute positively to the character of the area and the creation of a positive sense of place.
11. I share the Council's assessment that there is no objection in principle to the proposed front wall, porch, dormer windows, Juliet balcony, basement works or the decking area. However, the cumulative impact of the development as a whole would compromise the character and appearance of the main house and its effect on the street scene.
12. The appellant has drawn attention to a development at 19 Chantry Crescent, but other than the use of cladding it is not evident that the developments would be comparable in terms of height and scale. Limited information has been provided of the approved development, but on the basis of the information supplied it offers little support to the appeal proposals.
13. I therefore conclude that both developments would be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the street scene, and would conflict with the design aims of CS Policies CSTP22 and PMD2, and advice contained in Annexe 1. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and part of its environmental strand is to contribute to protecting and enhancing the built environment. A core planning principle of the Framework is to always seek to secure high quality design, but for the reasons given above neither development would comply with this principle and would not be sustainable development supported through the Framework. As a consequence, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR

² Thurrock 'Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development' Development Plan Document 2011