

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 March 2017

by M Seaton BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/16/3161444

4 & 6 Widcombe Gardens, Ilford, IG4 5LT

- 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 J Sandhu against the decision of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 3487/16, dated 21 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is an increase in depth of existing first floor extension (by 500mm) to match with depth of ground floor extension & first floor infill extension.
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Procedural Matter

1. I have noted that the Council has adopted a more concise version of the description of the development in the Decision Notice. However, I see no reason to dispense with the appellant's description of the development from the planning application forms, which I consider to accurately describe the proposals.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an increase in depth of existing first floor extension (by 500mm) to match with depth of ground floor extension & first floor infill extension at 4 & 6 Widcombe Gardens, Ilford, IG4 5LT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3487/16, dated 21 July 2016, subject to the conditions below:
 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: Drawing Nos. 04, 05, 06, 07 & 08 dated July 2016.
 3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

3. The main issues are;
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and on neighbouring dwellings; and,
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- whether the proposals would safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, having regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal properties are adjoining two-storey terraced dwellings set within a largely residential area. Both properties have previously been extended at first floor level, with the extensions located relatively centrally within the respective rear elevations, and which are indicated as covering an area of approximately 50% of the ground floor rear extensions. No. 4 Widecombe Gardens also possesses a large roof dormer extension on the rear elevation.
5. The proposed extensions would infill the void between the existing neighbouring first floor rendered extensions, and it is proposed would utilise a render finish and tiles to match the existing dwelling. The residual extension would undoubtedly result in a comparatively large cumulative addition to the first floor of the rear of the two properties, albeit that the existing symmetry at first floor level would continue to be reflected and I consider that the use of matching materials would assist with the assimilation of the extensions with the host properties.
6. I would not disagree with the Council's assessment of the level of coverage of the width of the properties. However, it was evident at the site visit that there is already significant variation in the scale and design of existing first floor rear extensions on neighbouring properties along this side of Widecombe Gardens. As a consequence I do not consider that the proposals, despite their overall size, would result in an unacceptable or harmful impact on the character and appearance of either the dwelling or the area.
7. I am therefore satisfied that the proposals would not conflict with Strategic Policy 3 of the London Borough of Redbridge Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 (the Core Strategy), Policies BD1 & BD5 of the London Borough of Redbridge Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document 2008 (the Primary Policies DPD), or the London Borough of Redbridge Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (the Householder SPD). These policies seek to advocate high quality design, and require development to be compatible with the character of an area, be of a style, massing, scale and design appropriate to the locality and in the case of extensions to complement the character of the host building.

Living conditions

8. The Council has also expressed concern over the proposals having a serious and adverse effect on the visual amenities enjoyed by the occupants of neighbouring properties. This has been expressed briefly within the Council's Delegated Report as relating to the extensions representing an overbearing feature for adjoining neighbours when viewed from their gardens.
9. I have carefully considered this contention, but whilst I accept that the extensions would be visible from other neighbouring properties and the rear of those facing on to Woodford Avenue, I do not share the Council's concerns. The extensions would be read in the context of the existing rear elevations and roofs of the dwellings, and would be 'bookended' by the existing first floor additions and set away from the boundaries with the adjoining dwellings at

Nos. 2 & 8 Widecombe Gardens. Furthermore, the distance from the rear gardens on Woodford Avenue, along with the presence of existing detached garages and outbuildings at the bottom of gardens on both Widecombe Gardens and Woodford Avenue, would also help to provide visual mitigation of the proposals.

10. As a consequence I do not regard the proposals as resulting in an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties, and the proposed development would therefore safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring properties, having regard to outlook. As a consequence, there would not be conflict with Strategic Policy 3 of the Core Strategy, and Policy BD1 of the Primary Policies DPD, or the Householder SPD. These policies require development to not prejudice the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and properties.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard conditions related to timeliness and the identification of plans, the Council has suggested a condition requiring the submission of details and samples of materials to be used on the construction of the external surfaces of the proposed extension. However, I note that the appellant has indicated on the planning application forms the intention to utilise render and tiles to match the existing dwelling, and I consider in the context of the dwelling and the area that a condition reflecting this would be adequate.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and subject to the conditions listed, the appeal is allowed.

M Seaton

INSPECTOR