

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: 25 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/16/3166755

Grove Residential Home, 107-109 Grove Road, Walthamstow, E17 9BU

- 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 Pooten against the decision of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application Ref 161646, dated 11 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is an extension to the side and rear roof slopes with three front rooflights (to accommodate workers) in connection with the existing Class C2 Residential Institutions use.
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Procedural Matter

1. There is a certain degree of variation between the appellant and the Council in the description of the proposed development. However, whilst the appellant has described the mechanism of creating the accommodation in the form of the loft conversion, the Council has described the specific nature of the works, which I note the appellant has also adopted in the Grounds of Appeal. I therefore consider the Council's description of development to be more accurate in the context of the proposed scheme.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the streetscene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is formed of a Victorian terraced property (No. 107) and a pair of more modern 1980's infill semi-detached properties (No. 109). The properties are linked by a ground floor extension and are occupied as a residential care home for between 10 and 14 residents with 24-hour care available for residents. The appeal site is set within a largely residential area.
 5. The proposed extensions would be to the roof of the pair of semi-detached properties at No. 109 Grove Road, and would entail substantial additions to both side roof planes as well the rear of the property. The extensions and alterations would effectively alter the hipped roof of the building to a gable roof.
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6. I accept that there is a certain degree of variety visible in roof forms within the area. However, the relationship between the resultant building and the neighbouring Victorian element of the residential care home and No. 111 Grove Road, would appear visually awkward from a design perspective, and would as a consequence be incongruous within the streetscene of Grove Road. In this respect, I have had regard to the appellant's contention regarding the limited visibility of the roof extensions from the public realm. However, in addition to the front elevation, I observed that the full size of the roof extensions would also be readily visible from Eden Road across the rear gardens of Nos. 111 & 113 Grove Road, and would appear from this viewpoint as particularly substantial and bulky additions to the rear of the existing building. Despite the proposed use of matching roof materials, I would agree with the Council's contention that the scale and form of the extensions would be out of proportion with the existing dwelling, and would not be in keeping with the prevailing character and appearance of development within the wider area.
7. I am satisfied that the scale and bulk of the proposed roof extensions would result in an incongruous and adverse effect on both the character and appearance of the appeal property and the streetscene. The proposals would therefore conflict with Policies CS2 and CS15 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Core Strategy 2012 (the Core Strategy), and Policies DM4 and DM29 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Development Management Policies 2013 (the DM Policies). These policies seek to ensure that extensions relate to the original building, that places and spaces are well designed and of a high quality of architecture and urban design, and that development reinforces the local character and distinctiveness of neighbourhoods, taking into account existing patterns of development and urban form.

Conclusion

8. The appellant has drawn my attention to the proposals as providing support for an existing business through the provision of accommodation for a member of staff, which in light of high housing costs and difficulties of recruiting in the area would represent an improvement to housing choice. However, whilst I acknowledge that on the basis of the limited evidence on the matter that the above could be regarded as a limited benefit in support of the proposed development, for the reasons I have already set out above, I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the building and area. As a consequence, I have not found the development to be in accordance with the Development Plan. I am satisfied that despite the limited benefit summarised above, that this would be significantly outweighed by the adverse impacts.
9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Seaton

INSPECTOR