

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2017

by Brendan Lyons BArch MA MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 25th May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/17/3171545
20 Almonds Avenue, Buckhurst Hill IG9 5JN

- 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 Ali Abbas against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 4378/16, dated 14 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as a 5m single storey rear extension with flat roof and 2 skylights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 5m single storey rear extension with flat roof and 2 skylights at 20 Almonds Avenue, Buckhurst Hill IG9 5JN, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 4378/16, dated 14 September 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site and Block Plans No.20AA 01; Proposed Ground Floor Plan No.20AA 05; Proposed Roof Plan No.20AA 06; Existing and Proposed Rear Elevations No.20AA 08; Existing and Proposed Side Elevations No.20AA 09; Existing and Proposed Sections No.20AA 10.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the house and of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey detached house located in a suburban residential area. The house and its neighbour to the east, No.22, have an angled relationship with the road, so that one front corner of the house is set behind the adjoining house to the west, No.18.
 4. The house originally dates from the 1950s and the central portion of the house retains its original hipped roof. Over time large two-storey flat-roofed extensions have been added to each side and a two-storey central porch to the
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front. Permission is now sought to add a flat-roofed single-storey extension across the full width of the rear of the house. The majority of this has already been built, with the remaining portion intended to replace an existing smaller flat-roofed extension.

5. The approved extensions have had a significant impact on the character of the house, giving it an expansive frontage, with an essentially symmetrical appearance, marked by the strong central porch feature. The rear elevation also benefits from a strong axial feature provided by a large glazed opening and balcony at first floor level, with other first floor openings in a balanced arrangement. Photographs of the rear before the appeal extension was begun show that the ground floor elevation was much less coherent, with a central glazed door but a more random pattern of fenestration. The remaining flat-roofed extension formed an awkward projection at one end of the extended façade and a faceted conservatory was uncomfortably placed at the other.
6. The rear elevation of the appeal extension would not be of any great design distinction, but it would retain a strong central doorway and a pattern of window openings similar to the earlier façade. It would improve the appearance of the rear of the house by reflecting the unbroken flat extent of the first floor. Seen from the rear, the depth of the extension, at some 4.9m, would not be critical, and the extension would not dominate the host dwelling. The sides of the house were already essentially blank walls, so that the additional depth to the rear would not appear unduly incongruous.
7. Therefore, the extension would continue the theme of earlier extensions and would not appear out of scale or character with the dwelling. The Council acknowledges that the house sits on a generous plot, so that garden space would not be unacceptably reduced. The Council also accepts that the extension would not affect the street scene or the wider character of the area.
8. However, photographic evidence provided by the appellant shows that significant rear extensions to individually designed houses, without any strong consistency of form or treatment, are an abiding characteristic of the local area. The appeal proposal would be compatible with the distinctive character of the area and be of a style, massing and scale appropriate to the locality.
9. The Council does not endorse concerns raised by residents of No.18 about the design and construction of the side elevation, the potential pattern of usage near the common boundary and the possible paving of the front of the house. I agree that the first two of these should not cause adverse effects on outlook or living conditions at No.18. Work to the front of the house does not form part of the current appeal proposal.
10. For the reasons set out above, I find that the proposal would comply with the general objectives for development set by Policy BD1 of the London Borough of Redbridge Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document. Although not cited in the reason for refusal, the Council has also referred to Policy BD5, which deals specifically with domestic extensions. The appeal proposal would also comply with this policy, as well as with the broader objectives for the built environment set by Policy SP3 of the London Borough of Redbridge Core Strategy.

Conditions

11. The Council has requested that three conditions be imposed, two of which are the standard conditions on commencement time and compliance with the approved plans, and the third to require materials to match the existing house. However, the first of these is not appropriate, as the development has already commenced. I agree that the other two conditions are reasonable and necessary.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, and having taken account of all representations made, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to conditions.

Brendan Lyons

INSPECTOR