
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2017

by Helen Cassini BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 31 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/16/3165961
62 Birkbeck Road, Romford RM7 0QP

- 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 Herman Allen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P1132.16, dated 6 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension with rear dormer to provide 2 additional bedrooms for children's home.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a roof extension with rear dormer to provide 2 additional bedrooms for children's home at 62 Birkbeck Road, Romford RM7 0QP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P1132.16, dated 6 July 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 210/01 Existing Site & Location Plans; 210/02 Existing Floor & Roof Plans; 210/03 Existing Elevations & Section AA; 210/12 Proposed Plans; 210/13 Proposed Elevations; 210/14 Proposed Sections AA, BB.
 - 3) No development shall take place until full details of doors and windows and samples of the materials, including rainwater goods, to be used in the construction of the extension have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall thereafter be carried out only in accordance with the details so approved.
 - 4) The proposed windows serving the bathroom in the loft at second floor level shall be glazed with obscure glass and permanently retained as such.
 - 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no window or other opening, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the flank elevations of the dormer hereby permitted.
-

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a detached two-storey dwelling, on the northern side of Birkbeck Road, close to the junction with West Road. Aside from the two, single storey church halls located to the east of the site, the character of the surrounding area is predominantly residential, consisting of mainly two-storey semi-detached dwellings.
4. I am mindful of the planning history in relation to the site. In particular the proposed scheme for a loft conversion with raised ridge and roof dormer which was refused in 2015¹. It is noted that the appellant has aimed to address the issues for refusal within their subsequent planning application, which is the subject of this appeal.
5. Policy DC61 of the London Borough of Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2008 (the DPD) states that planning permission will only be granted for development which maintains, enhances or improves the character and appearance of the area. Moreover, with particular regard to dormer extensions, The London Borough of Havering Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (the SPD) states that dormers must be well set back from the eaves set in from the sides and be below the ridge line.
6. The proposed dormer would alter the appearance and disposition of the existing roof form. However, as a consequence of the amendments made to the design of the appeal scheme, the dormer would appear as a subservient addition to the host dwelling. In addition, due to the amendments made, the proposal would comply with the guidance set out within the SPD with regard to being set in and back from the eaves, sides and ridge line. Consequently, I am satisfied that the overall scale, design and use of matching materials would ensure that the dormer would appear appropriate in the context of the existing design of the dwelling.
7. It is acknowledged that given the relatively prominent corner location, the host dwelling is readily visible within the public realm on West Road. Despite this, from observations made during the site visit, it was evident that a number of dormer extensions exist within the vicinity of the appeal site. It is therefore considered that dormer extensions are a design feature which has been successfully incorporated within the wider area. Accordingly, given the presence of similar extensions in proximity to the appeal site and the appropriate scale and design, the rhythm and character of both the host dwelling and the surrounding area would not be significantly altered.
8. Local residents have drawn attention to matters relating to the proposed change of use of the dwelling and anti-social behaviour within the area. I do not underestimate the importance of the above matters to those involved. However, these are not planning related matters relevant to the consideration of the appeal before me and they have not therefore contributed to my decision.

¹ Council reference P0092.15

9. Concern relating to parking issues has also been raised. No substantiated evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the proposal would result in highway safety issues. Moreover, no objection has been received from the Local Highway Authority. From observations made during the site visit, on-street car parking was available outside the appeal site and in the surrounding streets. It is accepted that this is only a snap shot in time, however given the lack of parking restrictions on these streets; it is considered that sufficient on-street parking would be available to safely accommodate any increase in the level of parking likely to arise from the appeal scheme. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposal would materially impact on highway safety issues.
10. Privacy concerns for neighbouring residents have also been raised. I consider the proposal would achieve adequate levels of separation which would not result in privacy issues. However, if I were to allow the appeal, I consider it would be reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the use of obscure glazing in the bathroom window in the loft on the second floor, in the interests of residential amenity.
11. On the basis of the evidence submitted and from my own observations, I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, street and garden area or wider locality. No material conflict therefore arises with the provision of Policy DC61 and the SPD. When taken together this policy and guidance, amongst other things, requires development to reinforce and respect the existing development pattern, the character of the host dwelling and the wider area.

Conditions

12. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council against the tests of the National Planning Policy Framework and advice provided in Planning Practice Guidance. I find them to be reasonable and necessary in the circumstances of this case, although minor amendments to the wording of some have been necessary.
13. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition is necessary requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans in order to provide certainty. A condition relating to materials is also appropriate in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the area. This condition is specified as a pre-commencement condition and is justified as it covers a fundamental aspect of the scheme which requires consideration and control before the commencement of development.
14. To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties, a condition relating to the glazing of the bathroom window in the loft at the second floor level is necessary. Finally, it is considered that the provision of windows and openings in the flank elevations should be subject to control in order to protect the living conditions of occupiers of nearby properties.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out above, and taking account of all other matters raised, I conclude, subject to conditions, that the appeal should be allowed.

Helen Cassini, INSPECTOR