

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 May 2017

by J A B Gresty MA MRICS

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

Decision date: 02 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/D/17/3170528
42 Plumstead Road East, Thorpe St Andrew NR7 9NE

- 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 James Le-May and Mrs Joanne Graver against the decision of Broadland District Council.
 - The application Ref 20161229, dated 21 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey and a single-storey extension to side and rear of existing semi-detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area and whether the development would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling with respect to loss of light and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached house situated in a row of similarly designed semi-detached houses. Most of the pairs of houses on this part of Plumstead Road East are separated by the width of driveways, garages or single-storey side extensions. Consequently, there is significant space between most pairs of houses at first floor level which contributes towards this part of Plumstead Road East having a spacious, attractive and largely regular pattern of residential development.
 4. The appeal proposal includes a two-storey side extension which would occupy most of the space between the host building and the appeal property's boundary with 44 Plumstead Road East. This would reduce the visible space at first floor level between the appeal property and No 44 by about half and, consequently, it would erode prevailing the spacious and regular pattern of development.
 5. The front of the proposed side extension would be built flush with the front elevation of the host building and the roof would have the same eaves and ridge
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heights as the main building. The lack of visual distinction between the side extension and the host building would contribute to the extended dwelling appearing large and bulky in comparison to the adjoining house and other nearby properties. This would contribute to the extension appearing as a prominent feature in the street scene. Also, the inevitable loss of symmetry of the pair of houses when viewed from the road would be emphasised by the large and bulky appearance of the extended dwelling, contributing further to the visual erosion of the regular pattern of development on this part of the road.

6. Overall, the cumulative effect of the proposed side extension's size and bulk, its design and the reduction visible space between Nos 42 and 44, would be for the extension to appear unduly prominent in the street scene and for it to harm the prevailing regular and spacious pattern of development, with consequential harm to the character and appearance of the local area. In these respects the proposed development would fail to meet with the requirements of good design required by Policy 2 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (JCS) and Policy GC4 of the Broadland District Council Development Management DPD (DM DPD).
7. Whilst there are some examples of two-storey side extensions to semi-detached houses nearby, these are not a strong characteristic of the local area and in the main they do not contribute positively to the character or appearance of Plumstead Road East. Each case should be considered on its own merits and the examples of two-storey side extensions in the local area do not weigh significantly in favour of the proposed development.
8. The appeal proposal includes a single-storey extension to the rear of the property which would in part replace existing structures. The single-storey extension would be small in relation to the host property and would not be a prominent feature of the building. Accordingly I concur with the Council that the extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area and it would accord with the design requirements of JCS Policy 2 and DM DPD Policy GC4.

Living Conditions

9. The two-storey side extension would stand close to the boundary with No 44 and would project back about 4 metres from the line of the main rear elevation of the host building. Whilst the side of the extension would appear tall and very prominent when viewed from the path to the side of No 44, only a small part of the extension would stand adjacent to No 44's back garden and views through the windows in the rear elevation of the house would be oblique. The windows in No 44's side elevation are obscure glazed and views from the rooms facing the appeal property would be limited. Therefore, the proposed side extension would not be an unduly prominent feature when viewed from within the house or from the garden at No 44 and the living conditions of the occupiers of No 44 would not be affected significantly with respect to outlook.
10. Due to the proposed side extension's height and close proximity to No 44, it is inevitable that it would cast shade on the side of the house at certain times of day. Also, it would result in a reduction in the amount of natural daylight which reaches No 44's side windows and the rooflights in its single-storey side extension. However, it would appear that some of the obscure glazed windows serve non-habitable rooms and stairs. A reduction in the amount of direct

sunlight and diffuse natural daylight to these areas within the house would have limited effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 44.

11. There is a room in No 44's side extension which has a good sized window and part glazed door which face towards the back garden to the south. Because of the amount of light which this room receives from its main window and door, the reduction in direct sunlight and natural daylight which the room's side windows and roof lights would receive would have limited effect on the overall daylight available in the room. In this respect the living conditions of the occupiers of No 44 would not be harmed unduly.
12. Overall, I conclude that the reduction in direct sunlight and diffuse natural daylight which would result from the development would have limited effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 44 and would not be reason to dismiss the appeal.

Conclusion

13. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. In this case the proposed two-storey side extension would harm to the prevailing character and appearance of the local area. Consequently, the design of the proposed side extension would not represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework. Whilst the proposed single-storey rear extension would represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework with regard to its effect on the character and appearance of the local area, this does not outweigh the harm the proposed two-storey side extension would do to the character and appearance of the local area and, on balance and for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J A B Gresty

INSPECTOR