

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2017

by C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/17/3172519
6 Marram Court, Grays, Essex, RM17 6UA

- 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 Tim Allen against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01653/HHA, dated 28 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single/double storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single/double storey side extension at 6 Marram Court, Grays, Essex, RM17 6UA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/01653/HHA, dated 28 November 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 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.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1, 2, 3 and unnumbered location plan.

Main issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is situated at the entrance to a small close of housing, and has a side elevation to Medlar Road. There is a wide gap to the side of the house that creates a set-back from Medlar Road. However, the house opposite in Medlar Close has seen a side extension into what would have once been a similar open area. Hence there is imbalance to these two properties that form the entrance to Marram Court.
 4. The proposed extension is designed to be set-back from the front elevation at first floor and have a lower ridgeline than the host property. The single storey element of the works would be modest additions. The proposals would thus appear subordinate to the original house and the pair to which No. 6 is
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attached. There would still be a sufficient gap retained to Medlar Road to retain a generally spacious feeling around the property and in the wider area. I also saw at my site visit that other properties have seen extensions to the side, bringing the properties closer to adjoining roads, including most notably at Salix Road and Speedwell Court. It therefore appears to me that side extensions of this general fashion have become part of the character of the area.

5. The Council draw attention to the fact that the size and proportions of the extension do not satisfy certain numerical standards as set out in Annexe A1 of the Thurrock Borough Local Plan 1997. I note that A1.1(ii) of the Annexe says the detailed criteria will '*normally*' apply, which indicates to me there may be material circumstances that allow for differences to the usual requirements. I am also mindful that more recent guidance on design is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that '*design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height...[etc]*'.
6. In this instance I consider the particular circumstances of this case with regards to the character of the area, the spacing to the side of the property and around the house, and the other extensions that have occurred in the area are material circumstances that point to an exception from the Annexe A1 standards being acceptable.
7. The development therefore complies with the objectives of the relevant development plan policies that seek to ensure new development is of a high standard of design, namely Policies PMD1 and CSTP22 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) 2015. The proposals would also be consistent with the core planning principle of the Framework that seeks to secure high quality design.
8. The appeal is therefore allowed. I have attached the Council's suggested conditions requiring matching materials, to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development, and a further condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR