
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2017

by J Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/D/17/3175197
10 Weald Close, Brentwood CM14 4QU

- 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 Patrick Young against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01803/FUL, dated 9 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is part one and two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. While the submitted site plan (PY.01.a November 2016) shows proposed decking the floor plans (PY.03.a) and elevational plans (PY.04.a) do not. Moreover the description of development on the application and appeal forms makes no reference to decking. The Council has however taken account of the decking shown on the submitted site plan in determining the planning application and included overlooking from the decking as a reason for refusal, albeit accepting that the elevational plans contain no reference to the decking. The appellant has confirmed in their appeal statement that the decking did not form part of the proposal before the Council and that the decking on the site plan was included in error. I have not considered the overlooking from the decking and my formal decision only addresses the extensions set out in the description of development.
3. The Council refers to the property forming a pair with No 12 Weald Close. The street is predominantly numbered on a consecutive basis, with some of the lower numbers omitted. The house is paired with No 11. This decision therefore refers to No 11.

Main Issue

4. The Council raises no concerns regarding the proposed single storey rear extension. I agree that the proposed single storey rear extension would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. However, I have not issued a split decision in this instance as I have no information to suggest that the appellant would wish to proceed with the single storey rear extension separately. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the proposed part one and two storey side extension on the character and appearance of the area.
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Reasons

5. Nos 10 and 11 are a pair of large attractive semi-detached houses with black and white timbered gables overhanging the ground floor frontages. The houses have a large roof with a shared central dormer positioned low on the roof slope above the inverted pitch created by the front gables to both properties. They retain much of their balance, character and symmetry despite a previous half hipped gable roof extension at No 11. This is in part due to the size of the roof extension, but also results from some masking by No 11's front gable.
6. Given their design and location at the end of a suburban cul-de-sac, Nos 10 and 11 are particularly prominent within the street scene. The appeal site is also bounded by No 8, which lies adjacent to the shared boundary. Despite No 8's proximity, No 10's existing flat roofed garage with a false pitched roof to the frontage provides a gap between the houses with views through to heavily treed sloping fields beyond the rear gardens. This gap is currently slightly more open than the gap between Nos 11 and 12.
7. The proposed part one and two-storey side extension would abut the boundary with the appeal site and No 8. Although the proposed extension steps in and back at first floor level, the two-storey extension would fill the majority of the existing gap between the appeal property and No 8. The proposed extension would introduce two further large roofs to the side of the main roof. The roof at the front of the side extension would form a hipped roof stepping down off the main house, and the roof at the back of the side extension would be set behind the first roof and hipped on four sides.
8. The size of the proposed extension and its large pitched roofs is such that it would significantly increase the width, height and prominence of the house when viewed from the street. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the extended house with its neighbour at No 8 would give rise to a cramped and uncomfortable arrangement of houses.
9. The two large proposed roofs combined with the scale of the proposed extension relative to the original house would fundamentally unbalance the symmetry of Nos 10 and 11. This would erode the attractive design of this pair of houses and diminish their contribution to the street scene, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. The proposed extension would change the nature of the relationship between this street and the surrounding fields, by substantially eroding the gap between the houses at first floor level. This would be particularly noticeable on approaching the property from Honeypot Lane, where it would no longer be possible to view the trees and fields between the houses. Given the prominent position occupied by the appeal site at the end of the cul-de-sac, the proposed extension would adversely affect the character of the area.
11. The appellant has referred to the roof form of neighbouring No 8 being not dissimilar to the roof design of the appeal proposal. Although I have very little information on the planning history of No 8, the house is of very different design to the appeal site at No 10. The purported similarity between the roof forms is not sufficient to mitigate the harm which would be caused by the proposal to the character and appearance of the area.

12. The appellant has also highlighted other developments in the local area. I have very little information on the properties' planning histories but their design, scale and surroundings differ from that of the scheme before me. I appreciate that the appellant has sought to use materials which are in keeping with both the original house and the neighbouring houses. However, the existence of other two-storey side extensions in the locality and the proposed materials do not justify the harm I have identified nor does the lack of objection from neighbours.
13. The appellant wishes to construct the proposed development to allow for extended family to live there in the future. While I have given consideration to the limited information provided, there is no indication of any immediate need. I am mindful of the advice contained in Planning Practice Guidance that in general planning is concerned with land use in the public interest¹. I do not consider that these personal circumstances outweigh the harm which would be caused by the proposed development.
14. I conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to Policy CP1 (i) and (iii) of the saved Brentwood Replacement Local Plan 2005. Policy CP1 (i) aims to ensure that development would not detrimentally affect visual amenity and the character and appearance of an area, while (iii) of the same policy intends to secure a high standard of design in all new development. The proposal would also be contrary to a core planning principle of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure high quality design.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Gilbert

INSPECTOR

¹ ID: 21b-008-20140306 (What is a material planning consideration?)