

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2017

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 09 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/D/17/3176481

35 Albert Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 7PR

- 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 Asad Sayeed against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application Ref. 170037, dated 4 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with rear dormer and Juliet balcony and rear roof extension with Juliet balcony to form 2 x bedrooms with en-suite.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. In Part E of the appeal form a different wording has been entered, but neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located towards the end of a terrace of dwellings which appear cohesive as a result of the original shared design. Although some properties have been extended and altered, the original form and architectural style remain discernible. In particular, the dwellings in this terrace have a two-storey rear wing which creates an 'L' shaped layout, although in this case the recess has been infilled at ground floor level.
 5. The proposed rear dormer window and the extension over the rear wing would occupy most of the original rear roof slopes, with the setbacks from the eaves appearing negligible. The size, scale and bulk of the combined roof extensions would be unduly dominant on the appeal property, creating a 'top heavy' appearance that would undermine the original form and roofscape of the building. The extensions would be incongruous in relation to the traditional design and form of this terraced house.
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6. Given the location of the dwelling towards the end of the terrace, the addition would be visually intrusive and inharmonious on the property when viewed from Leopold Road to the side. It is notable that this type of extension is identified in the Council's 'Residential Extensions and Alterations' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2010, which states that, on buildings with an L-shaped footprint, permission will not normally be granted for dormer extensions that turn the corner of the L-shape to create one large extension, as it will have too great a visual impact on the character of the original building.
7. As a result of its design, size and visual impact on the property, the proposal would conflict with the overarching design aims of Policy DM29 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Development Management Policies (2013) (DMP), and with DMP Policy DM4, which requires extensions to relate to the original 'host' building and to retain traditional features where appropriate. I do not share the appellant's assessment that the requirements of these policies would be met and exceeded by the proposal, or that the development would ensure the visual continuity of the established roofline. The absence of any adverse impact on neighbouring properties would not outweigh the visual harm of the development on the building itself.
8. The appellant has drawn attention to other similar extensions in the locality, some of which are visible from the rear garden of the appeal site, and others are seen from local streets. However, no details of any planning permissions for these developments have been supplied, nor details of the date or circumstances of their construction. Whilst the appellant advises that pre-application enquiries to the Council confirmed that this form of development was not initially encouraged but is now an accepted form of development in the Borough and throughout London suburbs, this is not supported by the advice in the SPD. I accept that there are similar developments in the local area, but they are not prevalent, and indeed demonstrate the visual harm that results from such extensive roof development. In this context, they offer limited support to the appeal proposal.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and would conflict with the aims of DMP Policies DM4 and DM29 and adopted SPD, and with Policy CS15 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Core Strategy 2012, which seeks to ensure the highest quality architecture and urban design, with new development responding positively to the local context and character.

Conclusion

10. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and part of its environmental strand is to contribute to protecting and enhancing the built environment. A core planning principle of the Framework is to always seek to secure high quality design, but for the reasons given above the proposal would not comply with this principle and would not be sustainable development supported through the Framework. As a consequence, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR