



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2017

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/17/3180186

162 Gorseway, Rush Green, Romford, Essex RM7 0SH

- 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 Colin Farr against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 17/00374/FUL, dated 1 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear, two storey rear and two storey side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises an end of terrace house, which is substantially set off from its side boundary, with the intervening area comprising of a hardstanding and a gate. On the other side of the boundary, 160 Gorseway forms the start of the next terrace. No 160 has been extended by way of a flat roofed 2 storey extension which is set well back from the front elevation of the property and set in from the boundary with the appeal site by just under 1m.
4. The area largely comprises of short rows of terraced properties. Although a number of the end of terrace properties have been extended to the side, the arrangement of the rows remains broadly intact with the spacing in between appreciably contributing to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The two storey form of the proposal would extend near up to the boundary with No 160. The Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2012) (SPD) states that, with regard to terraced properties, where it is considered that the gaps between buildings contribute positively to the character of the area, it will be expected that the first floor of proposed side extensions are set off the side boundary. As the first floor of the proposal would not be set off the boundary with No 160 to a significant degree, the spacing, or gap, up to the boundary would be lost. This would detract from the prevailing character of the largely distinct rows of terraced properties.

6. The SPD also cautions against the closure of gaps between terraced properties because this may result in a detrimental effect on the streetscene. Although No 160's extension is well set back, with the proposal, the space in front of the extension would, in effect, be enclosed by built development on three sides. This arrangement would not present a character of spacing in between the rows of terraced properties. Consequently, this would not address the harm that would arise by the loss of the spacing up to boundary and as a result, this would cause the detrimental effects which the SPD seeks to avoid.
7. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of examples of side extensions in the area. Whilst I accept that some of these have resulted in the loss of spacing between the rows of terraced properties, spacing has been maintained in others because they are separated by accesses to land to the rear, or because of the way the respective properties are sited on their plots. I consider that the prevailing character is largely intact, and it has not been substantially changed by the side extensions that are evident. As such, it is proper to maintain this character as it does appreciably contribute to the area. This equally applies both to properties at the end of terraces and on corner plots in this area, so that the character is not changed to one of a continual built up form, resulting in the loss of the short row of terraces and the associated spacing.
8. With regards to the appeal decision¹ referred to by the appellant, this is located some distance from the site and, as I have set out, the spacing between the terraces in this area does contribute positively to its character. I am satisfied that the circumstances are sufficiently different so as not to alter my decision.
9. Although I note comments about the modest size of the properties and a need to encourage larger family housing, this is not at the expense of maintaining the qualities of the area, where they contribute positively to its character and appearance. With regards to precedent, the character of the area has not been so substantially altered that the spacing between the rows of terraces has been lost. None of these matters change my conclusions.
10. I conclude the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would not comply with Policies BP8 and BP11 of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Local Development Framework, Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document (2011) which expects development to have regard to the local character of the area and help to create a sense of local identity, distinctiveness and place, and protect or enhance the character of the area. Similarly, I find that the proposal would not comply with the SPD, with the closure of the gap up to the boundary with No 160, and as this would result in a detrimental effect on the streetscene.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/Z5060/D/17/3171057 45 Clare Gardens, Barking, IG11 9JH.