The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 June 2019

by David Fitzsimon MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/19/3228189
57 Clyde Way, Romford RM1 4XT

- 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 Luke Horner against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
- The application Ref P1058.18, dated 8 July 2018, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2019.
- The development undertaken is a single storey rear extension and double storey side extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear extension and double storey side extension at 57 Clyde Way, Romford RM1 4XT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P1058.18, dated 8 July 2018, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawing refs. 1204-01-AB, 1204-01-ELE1&P1 Rev: A, 1204-01-ELE2&P1 Rev: B, 1204-01-EX1&P1 Rev: D, 1204-01-ST1&P1 Rev: A and 138-SECAA-P1.

    2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the host dwelling.

    3) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no window or other opening shall be formed in the flank wall of the two storey side extension hereby permitted.

    4) The roof area of the single storey rear extension hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area.

Procedural Matter

2. The extensions were substantially complete at the time of my visit. This has no bearing on my decision which is based on the planning merits of the case.

Main Issue

3. The second reason for refusal contained within the Council's Decision Notice suggests that the extension would be an unneighbourly form of development given its overall depth and proximity to the shared boundary. However, the Council's Delegated Report opines that the extension would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties in any way. On this basis, I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene within which it sits.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a traditional semi-detached property. It sits within a residential road which is home to a range of dwelling types in a variety of styles and external finishes.

4. The attached dwelling has retained the original hipped roof form. I understand that the Council raises no objection to the change from a hip to a gable at the appeal property on the basis that a loft conversion has previously taken place which included such a roof alteration under the provisions of permitted development. In addition, the Council raises no concern about the single storey rear extension and I have no reason to disagree.

5. The Council's main point of concern relates to the two storey side extension. This sits flush with the main front elevation of the host dwelling and its ridge follows that of the main house. This conflicts with the guidance contained within the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document titled '*Residential Extensions and Alterations*' (SPD) which explains that in order to appear subservient to the host dwelling and to avoid any potential terracing effect, the first floor of two storey extensions should be recessed from the main front elevation by at least a metre, whilst the ridge height should be slightly lower than that of the main roof.

6. The design approach endorsed by the SPD is one taken by many Councils and it is indeed sound advice. However, it is guidance and each proposal should be considered individually and on its merits. In this particular case, the visual prominence of the two storey extension is reduced because it sits behind a large main two storey bay and a narrower secondary two storey bay. The bays project from and dominate the main front elevation of the dwelling, giving it depth and visual interest. Furthermore, the appeal property sits in a road where many of the surrounding semi-detached dwellings have been altered in a manner which is markedly different to the attached dwelling. As a result, the street scene is of mixed character, with little uniformity.

7. The extension has resulted in some loss of symmetry with the attached dwelling, but there would also be a loss of symmetry if the first floor of the extension was recessed in the manner endorsed by the SPD. In the context of this particular street scene and given the design of the dwelling as I have described, I am satisfied that the extension as built is not materially more visually harmful than if it had been built with a first floor recess, and it would not result in a materially greater terracing effect.

8. On this basis, I conclude that the extension as built does not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or that of the street scene within

which it sits. To this end, I find no conflict with policy DC61 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document or the overall aims of the SPD which both seek to ensure that extensions respond well to the scale and proportions of the host dwelling and its surroundings.

Other matters

9. I have not had sight of any third party representations, but I note the Council's Delegated Report outlines concerns expressed by a neighbour that the extension harms the levels of privacy previously enjoyed by them. The flank elevation of the two storey side extension is blank and this could be retained by a suitably worded planning condition. I am also satisfied that the extension has not resulted in a significantly greater level of rearward overlooking than the situation before it was built.

Conditions

10. As the extension is substantially complete, a condition limiting the lifespan of the planning permission is not required. A condition to ensure that the development takes place in accordance with the approved plans is required for the avoidance of doubt. I also agree with the Council that a condition relating to external materials is required because the side elevation of the extension remains unfinished, to ensure a visually acceptable development. Conditions preventing the insertion of windows to the flank elevation of the two storey side extension and preventing the roof of the single storey rear extension from being used as a balcony are also required to protect the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

11. In allowing the appeal, I shall impose conditions accordingly.

David Fitzsimon

INSPECTOR