



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 July 2019

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/19/3230184

43 Cherwell Grove, SOUTH OCKENDON, RM15 6AX

- 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 S Kinsella (London Consultants Ltd) against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 18/01818/HHA, dated 15 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 28 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'double side and rear extension'.
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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. However, the application was revised prior to its determination, and it is clear from the plans that the proposal comprises a single storey side and rear extension, as described on the decision notice. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and I have done the same.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is on a residential development that is cohesive as a result of the original designs, form and materials of dwellings. On the northern side of Cherwell Grove the distinct layout is of terraced houses facing each other across open parking courtyards. The appeal property is an end-of-terrace house set back from the road in one of these courtyards, with a side garden up to the road beyond. The appeal site is more open than many gardens in the vicinity, which contain an array of house extensions and outbuildings, and views into many of them is restricted by solid walls, fencing or buildings.
5. Core Strategy¹ (CS) Policy PMD2 requires all design proposals to respond to the sensitivity of the site and its surroundings, and to contribute positively to the character of the area in which it is proposed. This is supported by the Thurrock Design Guide Residential Alterations & Extensions SPD July 2017, which advises that an extension should respect and respond positively to the

¹ Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development, adopted December 2011

character of the original dwelling such that its character is maintained or enhanced (paragraph 4.1.1), and that the form and scale of the extension should be appropriate to the original dwelling and the surrounding development pattern (paragraph 4.3.1).

6. Whilst the SPD generally supports flat roofs to rear extensions, the expanse of flat roof wrapping around the side and rear of the dwelling would be out of keeping with its original character and form. Compared to the footprint of the existing dwelling, the proposal would appear overly large and dominant. Although most of its impact would be confined to the garden of the appeal property, the excessive width of the side extension would be apparent in views from Cherwell Grove, and its depth in views from the road to the north, creating a degree of visual intrusion. The flat roofed form would reflect the existing porch at the property, but the width of the side extension would overwhelm the front elevation.
7. I note that there are some flat-roofed side and rear extensions in the vicinity, but I have not been supplied with details of any planning permissions granted for such developments, nor the planning policies against which they were assessed. Moreover, it is not evident from the information available that any of these examples are directly comparable to the proposal in terms of their overall size, and some include pitched roofs more reflective of the host dwelling.
8. The Council considers that the position of the side extension would be out of character with the context and appearance of the immediate locality as it would project beyond the notional building lines of Cherwell Grove. However, whilst the original development may have had a defined 'building line' this has become more fluid as a result of the various side extensions and outbuildings to the properties on the northern edge of Cherwell Grove. Moreover, the characteristic pattern on the northern side of the road is that of terraced houses facing each other across a parking courtyard, and this would not be undermined by the appeal proposal. In this regard, I do not find the proposal unacceptable, except insofar as the size of the proposed side extension would diminish the appearance of the existing dwelling and therefore its context.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider area, and would conflict with the aims of CS Policy PMD1, which amongst other criteria seeks development which does not cause unacceptable effects on the amenities of the area, and with CS Policy PMD2; with the aim of CS Policy CSTP22 for proposals to demonstrate high quality design founded on a thorough understanding of, and positive response to, the local context; and with the guidance in the SPD.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR