
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2019

by J Williamson BSc (Hons), MPlan, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/19/3228004

167 Bennetts Castle Lane, Dagenham, RM8 3YJ

- 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 Sood against the decision of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 18/01591/FUL, dated 12 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 November 2018.
 - The development is described as proposal of one end-terraced two-bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Whilst the appeal form refers to Miss M Sood, the planning application was made by Mr Sood, and I have therefore dealt with the appeal on that basis.
3. I have used the description of development provided on the Council's Decision Notice, as this more accurately describes the development, ie erection of first-floor rear extension to existing house and erection of two-storey side/rear extension to create additional 2-bedroom house.
4. I observed that some development has occurred at the appeal site, including a first-floor rear extension. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.
5. Since the determination of application 18/01591/FUL the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been revised (February 2019). However, none of the changes are material to this case.

Main Issues

6. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, the living conditions of future occupiers and highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

7. The appeal site comprises a two-storey end of terrace dwelling with outdoor space to the rear. The site is located on the Becontree residential estate, which was built during the period mid-1920s to mid-1930s, and is of local historical

- interest, though not formally designated, as at the time, it was the largest public housing scheme in the world.
8. With respect to the first-floor rear extension that forms part of this appeal, I consider that its size, scale and siting to the rear of the property would ensure that its relationship with the host property would be acceptable and that it would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the area.
 9. The proposed dwelling would be constructed on the side of the existing dwelling, at the end of the terrace. However, it would not sit comfortably within the terrace, due to various design features. Thus, its main body would be significantly set-back from the front elevation of the dwelling, and therefore the frontage of the terrace. This would significantly interrupt the street frontage of the terrace. As the roof ridge of the main body of the proposal would not be in line with the existing ridge, the ridge line of the terrace would be disrupted.
 10. A two-storey gable, approximately 3 m deep, would project off the front of the main body. The gable would be set back from the front elevation of the existing property by approximately 2.5 m. I note that the appellant asserts that there are front gables on other properties in the area. However, except for a small number of front gables located on newer properties, the front gables I observed located on original estate terraces are positioned at each end of the terraces and are relatively shallow, projecting only approximately 0.5 m beyond the terrace's main front elevation. Consequently, I consider that the front gable on the new dwelling would be an incongruous feature sited at the end of the terrace.
 11. I conclude that the siting and design of the new dwelling would significantly disrupt the uniform lines of the existing terrace, ie the front and rear eaves, the roof ridge, the primarily uninterrupted front roof slope and the existing terrace elevation fronting Bennetts Castle Lane.
 12. Due to the factors outlined above, I consider that the new dwelling would not be in keeping with the terrace. It would have a significant detrimental impact on the streetscene and therefore the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposed development would not accord with policies CP2 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, July 2010 (CS); policies BP2, BP8 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document, March 2011 (DPD), which seek, collectively and amongst other things, to respect local context and reinforce local character, distinctiveness and history and to protect and enhance the historic environment.

Living conditions

13. The existing site would be sub-divided into 2 plots and outdoor space for each of the resultant dwellings would be provided. The Council conclude that the new dwelling, a 2-bedroom unit, would have 88 sqm of outdoor space and the existing dwelling, potentially a 3-bedroom unit, with the addition of the first-floor rear extension, would have 38 sqm outdoor space.
14. I note that the appellant considers that the outdoor space provided for each of the dwellings would be enough for the accommodation proposed. I agree that the outdoor space that would be provided for the new dwelling would be sufficient. However, I consider that the extent of outdoor space that would be

provided for the existing dwelling would not be adequate to meet the needs of future occupants.

15. Policy BP5 of the DPD requires new dwellings to provide an appropriate level of outdoor space, and the minimum standard stated in the Policy is 50 sqm for a 2-bedroom house and 60 sqm for a 3-bedroom house. Hence, at 38 sqm the resultant outdoor space that would be provided for the existing dwelling, 167 Bennetts Castle Lane, falls substantially below the standard required for a 3-bedroom house. Furthermore, even if the additional first-floor room that would be provided in the existing dwelling was not used as a bedroom, the proposal would still not meet the standard of outdoor space required for a 2-bedroom dwelling. Consequently, the development would not accord with Policy BP5 of the DPD.

Highway safety

16. The development would provide one car parking space at the front of the existing dwelling and storage for 2 bicycles at each of the dwellings. At present 2 cars could be parked on-site. Therefore, the proposal would result in one car parking space less than there is at present.
17. The appellant contends that, although only one on-site parking space would be provided, there are no parking restrictions on the street; therefore, on-street parking would not be an issue. I observed during my site visit that parking restrictions were limited in the vicinity of the site.
18. I acknowledge that the site is in an area which has a low level of accessibility to public transport. However, as one car parking space would be provided, cycle storage for both properties would be provided, on-street parking is available within the vicinity of the site and there is a degree of access to public transport, in respect of highway safety, I conclude that the development would not add further harm to that identified above.

Other Matters

19. In addition to the above, concerns have been raised regarding the effect on living conditions of neighbouring properties. However, given the siting of the proposal and its orientation with, and distance from, neighbouring properties, I consider that the proposed development would not harmfully change the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
20. The appellant asserts that the proposed development would provide accommodation for first-time occupiers, which is greatly in demand. The appellant also states that the site is in an existing residential area and is brownfield land, which is preferable to having to build on greenfield sites. However, I consider that these considerations neither singularly nor collectively outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons outlined the appeal is dismissed.

J Williamson
INSPECTOR

