



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2019

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/19/3234131
180 Wood Lane, Dagenham RM9 5SS

- 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 Roma Tabu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 19/00561/FUL, dated 27 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as a proposed two storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - The effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupiers of 178 Wood Lane having particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site forms an end dwelling of a terrace of four, two-storey houses within a pedestrian cul-de-sac of similar houses known locally as a 'banjo' within the Becontree Estate, built between 1921 and 1934. The estate is of local importance due to fact that at the time, it was the largest public housing scheme in Britain. The appeal site and neighbouring No.182 Wood Lane sit perpendicular to one another. The appeal site is positioned in a corner and benefits from having a large garden to the rear of the property.
4. The dwelling has previously been extended to the side and rear by a single storey wrap around extension, with the side extension set back from the front building line of the dwelling. The proposed development seeks to replace this extension with a two-storey part side and rear extension to include a single storey extension, together with a front porch.

5. Although the proposed two-storey side extension would be set back from the front building line, it would be visible within the street scene given its width and height in this corner position. The eaves line would carry through to meet the host eaves, however the proposed roof configuration would be at odds with the host dwelling as it is designed as a hipped roof. The roof of the host dwelling has been altered to a gable end, and whilst this has reduced the symmetry of the terrace, the addition of this extension would further emphasise the imbalance to the terrace. In addition, there is no fenestration or design features to be introduced to the façade facing the street scene to break up its massing.
6. On this basis, the extension would appear as an out of character addition to the property and would be a prominent and incongruous feature within the street scene that would compromise the character and appearance of the area as a result.
7. None of the proposed rear development would be visible to the public domain. However, the extension would project approximately 5.7m from the host rear building line. The Council's adopted 2012 Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) advises rear single storey extensions should not normally exceed 3.65m. The combination of extensions to the rear of the dwelling would exceed the design guidance within the SPD and even with the use of matching materials, the development would visually dominate the proportions of the host dwelling and would not complement the host dwelling, which would in turn be harmful to its character.
8. An extension has been erected to the side and rear of 174 Wood Lane and brought to my attention by the appellant. The extension is not directly comparable as that extension is set further back from the front building line of the host dwelling, it is less wide than the proposed appeal development, the front elevation provides openings to break up its facade, and the roof is materially different. This development appears subservient to the host dwelling, in acute contrast to the development proposed.
9. As part of my assessment I have also had regard to the historical significance of this estate and its relevance to early public housing. Its character should therefore be preserved by sympathetic extensions. However, the proposal is out of context with the local area and harmful to its significance as a 'banjo' and is therefore in conflict with Policy BP2 of the Planning for the Future of Barking and Dagenham Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document, March 2011 (DPD) and Policy CP2 of the Barking and Dagenham Core Strategy July 2010, that in particular, seeks development to respect its local context and distinctiveness.
10. As well as this, the proposal is in conflict with the Barking and Dagenham DPD Policy BP8 in its aims of that part of the policy to have regard to local character only. This is echoed in Policy BP11 that seeks to, amongst other matters, provide high quality architecture.
11. In addition, the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that seeks new development to achieve well designed places by, amongst other criteria, ensuring development is sympathetic to local character and history.

Living Conditions

12. In terms of the impact of the development on the living conditions of the occupants of 178 Wood Lane, I have taken account of the SPD's guidance that recommends applying the 45-degree rule to assess the impact of a two-storey extension on neighbouring outlook. Having viewed the location of the neighbouring windows and their relationship with the appeal site, together with the length and height of the two-storey extension, I do not consider that the extension would significantly compromise the outlook from this closest window, which would remain largely open in aspect.
13. The single storey extension would project close to the party boundary with No. 178. The neighbouring property has a large garden shed detached from the dwelling that sits in front of their French doors and close to the party boundary with the appeal site. This metal shed has a degree of permanence about its size and finished material. Part of the sloping roof of the extension would be visible above the boundary fence, however, the combination of the shed and this fence would screen the majority of the proposed single storey extension.
14. Therefore, I conclude that the proposals would not adversely compromise the outlook from 178 Wood Lane or from their rear garden and to this end I do not find harm to the living conditions of its occupants. Whilst the proposed development is contrary to the Council's DPD Policies BP8 and BP11 in its aims to have regard to local character, where the policy is more specifically related to residential amenity, the development would protect residential amenity.

Other Matters

15. There are many extended dwellings within the local area with 156 and 158 Wood Lane identified by the appellant as examples of precedent. However, this is not directly comparable to the appeal site due to the layout of the properties, their relationship with one another and the differing developments. As such I am not minded to allow the appeal in their light. In any case, I have assessed this proposal on its own individual merits.
16. I have had regard to the Framework and its aims to use land effectively as well as the appellant's argument that they should be able to extend their home, to which I do not disagree. However, this does not alter my decision as I have found there would be overriding planning harm to the character and appearance of the area which would accordingly result in conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

17. Whilst I have not found there to be harm arising to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, this would not be sufficient against the harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area. For that reason, the appeal is dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR