The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2019

by Ian Harrison BA Hons DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/19/3236695
Land adjacent to 3 Southern Way, Romford RM7 9PA

- 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 Lowfield Developments against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
- The application Ref P0760.19, dated 14 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 July 2019.
- The development proposed is the demolition of an existing detached double garage and the erection of a detached 2-storey 1-bedroom dwelling with associated parking and amenity space.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The decision notice includes a reason for refusal related to the Mayor of London Community Infrastructure Levy. However, it is apparent that this was intended to appear on the decision notice as an informative and I have proceeded on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within a residential area which consists of semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Whilst 1 and 3 Southern Way have a varied appearance and a layout that is more reflective of the properties of London Road, the majority of Southern Way features buildings of consistent scale and positioning relative to the road, with similar bay projections and gaps between groups of buildings. Therefore, despite the variation of materials and the presence of extensions and alterations, there is a consistency to the built form that creates a pleasant suburban character. A slight contrast to this consistency is the dwelling at 62 Southern Way which is detached, features a gable ended front projection and appears to be a more recent addition to the street.

5. The appeal site represents a comparatively wide gap between dwellings, which hosts a brick garage building that fills the width of the site. Forward of the existing building, the site is separated from the neighbouring properties of 3

and 5 Southern Way by low walls, with a taller wall and gates at the front of the site. The proposal is for the erection of a 2 storey dwelling with a single bedroom, a parking space to the front and a garden to the rear. The dwelling would feature brick and render to the elevations and a hipped roof, with a 2 storey, gable ended front projection and a single storey rear projection. I have been made aware of previous proposals and a planning appeal[1] at this site, but as the proposal is different, I shall consider it on its own merits.

6. A small gap would be provided between the flank walls of the dwelling and the site boundary, but the dwelling would still be close to both side boundaries of the plot. The spacing around the building would therefore be unlike the other built form within the locality and, as such, the dwelling would be reliant on land outside the appeal site to create its setting. Although the existing garage fills the width of the site, as this is a single storey building of entirely different character, it is not imposing within the street and appears to be subservient to the adjacent dwellings. The same would not be the case for the proposed dwelling which would appear cramped at the site and therefore at odds with the pattern of development within the locality.

7. Whilst it appears that the building has been positioned to create a stepped building line that reflects the position of neighbouring dwellings, by sitting forward of 3 Southern Way, the dwelling would be particularly conspicuous from the entrance to the road. As a result of it being detached, the proposed external materials and fenestration and the form and appearance of the front projection, the dwelling would represent a substantial contrast from the majority of the surrounding dwellings. Although it would include some similar features, the dwelling would also be a variation to the dwellings of 1 and 3 Southern Way. In this case, the appearance of the dwelling would heighten its visual effect and emphasise its presence within the street, thereby not complementing the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

8. There are similarities with the dwelling at 62 Southern Way, but as that dwelling is in a more discreet location within the street, is positioned to align with its neighbour and is of different appearance, the presence of that dwelling does not alter my assessment of the context in which the proposed dwelling would be viewed and the harm that it would cause.

9. The appellant has identified that the delivery of housing within the Havering Borough has fallen short of the housing supply targets that are contained within the development plan. However, as only one dwelling would be proposed, the benefits arising from the contribution of the site towards the supply and delivery of housing do not outweigh the harm caused in respect of the main issue. Similarly, whilst the National Planning Policy Framework supports the use of previously developed land such as the appeal site and the site complies with the requirement for development to have access to services, I do not find that these aspects of the development outweigh the harm that has been identified.

10. For these reasons, the development would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policies DC3 and DC61 of the London Borough of Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2008 which combine to require that development, amongst other

[1] APP/B5480/A/08/2090984

things, responds to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development, complements the character of the area through the layout and appearance of development and integrates with surrounding buildings. The proposal would also be contrary to the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document 2010 which states that development should reinforce and add to the positive aspects of the built environment.

Conclusion

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

Ian Harrison

INSPECTOR