



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2019

by M Heron BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3236865

45 Egerton Gardens, Seven Kings, Ilford IG3 9HR

- 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 Miss Shohana Sharmin against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0817/18, dated 21 February 2018, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side/roof extension. Front dormer. Conversion of garage into habitable room. New front porch. Alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development within the application form shows that permission was originally sought for a first floor extension with rear and front dormers and a front porch. However, from the evidence before me, the scheme was amended during the course of the Council's determination and, amongst other changes, the rear dormer was omitted from the development. These alterations are reflected on submitted plans and the Council has assessed the proposal as a 'First floor side/roof extension. Front dormer. Conversion of garage into a habitable room. New front porch. Alterations to fenestration.' I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis and have used this revised description of development for my formal decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether or not the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Bungalow Estate Conservation Area, with particular regard to its effect on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within the Bungalow Estate Conservation Area (CA). I therefore have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of this CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also advises that great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and any harm which is less than substantial must be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal.

5. In considering the significance of the CA, this appears to derive not only from the uniform layout of bungalows set in well-landscaped streets, but also from their architectural design which is enriched by a variety of vernacular detailing.
6. No 45 is a detached bungalow constructed under a pitched roof. Its simple design includes two projecting gable features to front which differ in size and incorporate bay windows. Adjacent to the larger gable feature is an attached single storey side garage. This is constructed under a flat roof behind a small dummy pitch roof. In addition, an unobtrusive porch canopy hood is positioned above the front door between the bay windows. Overall, although asymmetrical, the architectural design of No 45 appears balanced and makes a pleasing contribution to the immediate streetscene. It is also typical of the architecture within the CA and therefore contributes positively to its character, appearance and significance.
7. This proposal seeks permission to construct a first floor side extension above the existing garage and to convert this garage into a habitable room. It also includes a front facing dormer window, a new front porch and alterations to the fenestration. In my view, a pitched roof design for the side extension would be acceptable. Nevertheless, this extension would not be stepped down from the main roof ridge height by three metres, as required by the Council's Bungalow Estate Conservation Area Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Its height would be level with that of the adjacent larger gable feature and would exceed the height of the smaller gable. Consequently, not only would the side extension be contrary to the SPD, but, when viewed in conjunction with the adjacent gable, it would also add an inappropriate amount of mass to one side of No 45. This would unbalance the host property, to the detriment of its appearance.
8. Furthermore, the proposed porch would not be stepped back by 0.5 metres from the bay windows, as required by the SPD, and would be positioned close to these windows. I find that its size, together with its more solid appearance, would unacceptably compete with the adjacent bay windows and erode their visual separation. This would reinforce the proposal's harmful impact upon the design and balance of No 45. Lastly, the proposed dormer window would be acceptable when viewed in isolation. However, it would add to the visual clutter of the original, simple, elevation of No 45. It would therefore draw the eye and exacerbate the harmful impact of the proposal as a whole.
9. I appreciate that there are similar developments to that proposed within the area. However, in the absence of details about how or when such developments were assessed, they carry little weight in my assessment of the appeal scheme, which I have performed based on its individual planning merits.
10. Taking everything together, the cumulative impact of the individual elements of the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property. Such harm would be apparent from the public domain. The scheme would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Pursuant to the requirements of the Framework, I categorise the harm to the CA to be less than substantial. No public benefits of the scheme have been put forward by the appellant and none are evident through my own assessment. Consequently, it has not been demonstrated that there are sufficient public benefits to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the CA.

11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan and the advice of the SPD. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that developments complement the character of the host building and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas. It would also be contrary to the advice of the Framework insofar as it seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Other Matters

12. I acknowledge that the proposal was subject to a lengthy determination period by the Council. Whilst I sympathise with the appellant in this respect, any concerns regarding due process during the processing of the planning application fall outside of the remit of this decision.
13. In addition, I am required to determine this appeal having regard to the development plan and national policy which are in place at the time of my decision and have done so accordingly.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations, including the advice of the Framework, which outweigh this conflict. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Heron

INSPECTOR