The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2019

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/19/3237826
102 The Gardens, Feltham, Hounslow TW14 9PW

- 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 Peter Ngusi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
- The application Ref 00472/102/P4, dated 10 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2019.
- The development proposed is described as proposed ground and first floor rear extension and conversion of a dwelling house to 2 two bedroom dwelling houses with entrance porches to both dwellings.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

   - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; and
   - The effect on the living conditions of the future occupiers in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is part of The Gardens housing development in Feltham and is a two-storey semi-detached house located in a cul-de-sac that sides onto open space but is otherwise surrounded by similarly designed house types. The dwelling has a disjointed appearance to it as the two-storey side element does not respect the design characteristics of the original dwelling.

4. The appellant seeks to subdivide the dwelling with the addition of extensions and matching roof above, to create two independent houses with front porches and individual rear gardens.

5. The Council's Local Plan 2015-2030 Policy SC1 prevents the development of self-contained residential units within the curtilage of existing dwellings where the proposal would be in conflict with other policies in the Plan.

6. The nature of the existing two-storey side element is of poor design and appears as an incongruous feature within the street scene. The proposed development to the front using matching fenestration, paired front entrances and single roof above, would better harmonise with the original dwelling, and with the street scene. The proposed improved design to the frontage is not disputed.

7. However, the proposed combinations of both two-storey and single storey extensions would significantly alter the face of the rear of the dwelling. The two-storey extension would appear as an excessively wide extension with a large expanse of roof above, and a further single storey element attached to part of this would also emphasise its scale and mass and overall, would not complement the proportions of the original dwelling. Rather, it would dominate the host dwelling, losing its original identity.

8. Furthermore, the visual effect of the development would extend beyond the confines of the site, as it would be visible from the public domain through the gaps in the houses between 108 and 110 The Gardens. Whilst I accept that the rear of the dwelling is currently visible through this gap, I consider it is not visually harmful.

9. I have taken into account the appellant's view that there are examples of outbuildings and extensions to other properties, larger in scale, that they consider to be of a questionable design and quality, and the poor design of the existing two-storey element, but I am not persuaded by these arguments.

10. I have also had regard to the appellant's view that the proposal would meet some of the Council's design guidelines, and that they are not specific in their advice relating to extending from existing side extensions, as well as their opinion that guidance is not a form of policy. However, the dwelling could be altered to create an improved balance without the need for conversion into two dwellings, and as the proposed extension would be substantially larger and more visually prominent than what currently exists, it would appear as an incongruous feature, that is not subordinate to the host dwelling but harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

11. Overall, the limited design improvements I have acknowledged would not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. Therefore, the proposal taken as a whole, would not respect its context and would not be in character with the host dwelling. To this end, I consider the proposal would be in conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy SC1, as well as Policies CC1 and CC2 of the Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 to, amongst other matters, respond to local character and context, and in addition, the design and placemaking aims of the London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance 2016. Finally, it would be in conflict with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework for new development to achieve high quality design.

Living Conditions

12. I have considered the effect of the proposed two-storey extension on the outlook from an adjacent rear facing bedroom window of the same house. The relationship would be particularly close, however this bedroom would also be served by a front window facing north west. On this basis I consider that the

outlook from this bedroom window would not be unduly compromised or a sense of enclosure arise as a result of the development.

13. Therefore, whilst I consider Local Plan Policy CC1 not to be relevant on this occasion, I can find no conflict with Local Plan Policy CC2 in particular regard to providing adequate outlook and minimising overbearingness and overshadowing.

Other Matters

14. Whilst I have had regard to the need for housing supply and growth within the Borough; the size of the proposed new houses would exceed minimum housing standards; there would be adequate rear amenity space, these attributes would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area I have identified.

15. The attached neighbour has raised concerns regarding light into their property and loss of privacy. A single storey extension would sit approximately in line with their single storey extension, and therefore no loss of light or privacy would occur to the property. The proposed two-storey element would not be sufficiently close to the attached neighbour to cause a loss of light or privacy. Matters pertaining to property values are not within my jurisdiction to comment upon.

Conclusion

16. I have found no harm would arise to the living conditions of future occupiers of the dwellings and whilst I acknowledge there is an element of design improvement that the proposal would bring, it is the overall scale and massing of the development that would harm the character and appearance of the area. For this reason, the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR