



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2020

by M Seaton DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 May 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3241830

46 Monkams Avenue, Woodford Green, IG8 0EY

- 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 Mrs Elaine Noy against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 3120/19, dated 23 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is single and part two storey rear extension. Single storey front extension incorporating new front porch. Loft conversion with one roof light to side elevation. Raising of roof ridge height and alterations to roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issues are whether the proposed development would result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a predominantly residential area and is set within a sloping street scene and occupied by a two-storey detached dwelling.
4. The development would be situated within the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) places a duty upon the decision-maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. This is also reflected in the approach set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
5. The Woodford Broadway Conservation Area Appraisal dated November 2013 (WBCAC) identifies the appeal site as being located within *Character Area 1: Northern Section*. The WBCAC identifies the quality of housing stock to be very high, with a variety of different details displayed albeit across the wider Monkams Estate the housing is observed as forming neat clusters that share similar details within an overriding suburban setting.

6. The WBCAC does however highlight as an issue affecting the area, a longstanding pressure to increase the provision of accommodation on individual residential plots. Nevertheless, whilst many extensions are identified as sympathetic to the character of the building and adjacent properties, others have distorted the original appearance of the houses or constitute unsightly intrusions. Common interventions include attic conversions and extensions into the roofspace, and there have been numerous examples where the extensions are excessively large and obtrusive. The WBCAC guides that extensions should be carefully designed to ensure that they respond well to the character of the house and adjacent properties, both in terms of their scale and design, including the use of materials.
7. I would agree with the broad summary as set out in the WBCAC, and in particular how it relates to the appeal site. The existing dwelling sits within a strong established building line along the eastern side of Monkams Avenue where dwellings broadly step downwards in terms of their height from north to south following the contours of the street. The appeal site possesses a comfortable set back from the road frontage behind a front garden, as well as possessing a long and mature rear garden. Whilst the dwelling is of a more limited stature than others within the street, where there was observed to be some variety in both design interpretation and overall scale on appeal sites of differing size, and it does exhibit some commonality in terms of design features.
8. I have had careful regard to the Council's reference to concerns that the extension to the roof of the proposed dwelling would significantly increase its bulk and would not read as subordinate to the scale of the original dwelling. I recognise that inevitably there would be an overall change to the appearance of the dwelling when viewed within the context of the street scene. However, I acknowledge that whilst any stepped change in ridge heights within the sloping street scene would be lost, there would be relative consistency in the terminal ridge height of the resultant property when contrasted with that of the neighbouring dwellings.
9. Nevertheless, the disposition and bulk of the proposed rear extensions, particularly given the significantly increased expanse of roofscape, would have the principal adverse effect on the appeal property. Whilst the proposed extensions would be confined towards the rear part of the property, there would be a clear disconnect between the existing retained two-storey gable element within the front part of the dwelling facing on to Monkams Avenue, and the substantial bulk of extension and roof that would consequently loom beyond towards the rear. This would result in an awkward juxtaposition between the design of the existing dwelling and the proposed extensions which would appear as incongruous in the context of the existing property.
10. The proposal would overwhelm the existing character of the dwelling and appear as a substantial and obtrusive addition to the property. Despite the use of matching materials as a means of assimilating the extension with the existing dwelling and the incorporation of a hipped roof, the proposed rear extensions and raising of the roof height would result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property.
11. Turning to the proposed single storey front extension to provide an enlarged porch, I accept that the resultant proposal would be larger than the existing

porch detail. However, I do not consider that it would result in a visually dominant form of development on the front of the dwelling, or that the detailed design would result in an unacceptable departure from the existing appearance of the development or of existing such features within the wider vicinity.

12. The Framework makes a distinction between a development causing substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset and works that would lead to less than substantial harm. Paragraph 196 of the Framework continues by stating that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. In this case, I find that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm for the reasons described. In respect of public benefits, I have not been provided with any contended benefits as part of the appeal submissions, and therefore even allowing for limited harm to the significance of the Conservation Area, no matters have been adduced to outweigh the identified harm.
14. For these reasons, I have found that the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and in accordance with Section 72 of The Act, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. There would be conflict with policies LP26 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030, adopted March 2018. These policies seek to ensure that development is of a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness and is well integrated and has regard to and respect for the surrounding area in terms of layout, form, style massing, scale and design, and conserves and enhances the character and significance of the historic environment.

Other Matters

15. The appellant has drawn my attention to contended inconsistencies in the Council's Delegated Report, and with regards the interpretation of the guidance set out within the Council's Housing Design SPD 2019 related to the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Despite this, I note the Council has not raised any specific concerns regarding the impact of the proposed extensions on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. I have nevertheless had regard to the concerns of a resident of Monkams Drive to the installation of bi-folding doors and the consequent impact on noise and disturbance. However, I see no reason in light of my own observations of the appeal site that such a design feature would necessarily result in the contended loss of residential amenity, particularly given the distances between the properties involved.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR