



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 October 2020

by Alex Hutson MRTPI CMLI MArborA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 October 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3251162

21 Erith Crescent, Collier Row, Romford, Essex RM5 3JJ

- 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 Julie Byrne against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0161.20, dated 3 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is "Installation of block paving and channel drain (retrospective)".
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. There is no description of development shown on the relevant section of the application form. I have therefore taken the description as shown on the Council's decision notice and this is reflected in the banner heading above.
3. The development, which includes block paving to the whole of the frontage of 21 Erith Crescent, has already been implemented and I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises 21 Erith Crescent, a maisonette within a two storey semi-detached property, and its front and rear gardens. Dwellings along Erith Crescent tend to display low front boundary brick walls and a level of vegetation within their front gardens. This contributes positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene and area. It is my understanding that prior to the implementation of the development, the area to the front of No 21 comprised a vegetated garden and low front boundary brick wall, consistent with the character and appearance of the area.
6. The development has removed the low front boundary brick wall and all the vegetation within the front garden of No 21 and has replaced it with hard standing for the parking of cars. This appears at considerable odds with the

prevailing pattern of development along Erith Crescent and noticeably erodes the verdant quality of the streetscene. I therefore consider that the development gives rise to considerable harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene and area.

7. The appellant highlights four other examples of front gardens in Erith Crescent completely given over to hardstanding for parking. However, it is unclear to me whether they benefit from planning permission. Moreover, they also appear at odds with the prevailing pattern of development along Erith Crescent, given the lack of low front boundary walls and vegetation. They do not, therefore, justify a planning permission in this instance.
8. In light of the above, the development is contrary to Policy DC61 of the Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Plan Document 2008, which requires, amongst other things, development to maintain, enhance or improve the character and appearance of the local area.
9. The development is also contrary to the guidance of the Havering Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (SPD). The SPD advises that boundary treatment should reinforce the prevailing character of the streetscene, that the loss of front gardens to parking has negative implications for the character of streets and that proposals for parking in front gardens should retain approximately 40% of the front garden as soft landscaping for visual amenity reasons.

Other matters

10. I acknowledge that the appellant has made adequate provisions for surface water drainage. However, this matter does not outweigh the harm I have identified.
11. The appellant indicates that she was not aware that planning permission was required to undertake the development. Nonetheless, this matter has no bearing on my consideration of the appeal.
12. The appellant states that she would be willing to make amendments to the development to incorporate a level of soft landscaping. However, I must consider the plans which were before the Council when it made its decision on the application and those which are before me in this appeal. Should the appellant wish to pursue such amendments, then a fresh application should be made to the Council.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alex Hutson

INSPECTOR