



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2020

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DiP TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02/11/2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W1905/D/20/3254931

1 Laburnum Road, Hoddesdon, EN11 0PL

- 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 Ms Meriam Handam against the decision of the Borough of Broxbourne Council.
 - The application Ref 07/20/0260/HF, dated 12 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is a part single/part double storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the area; and
 - living conditions, with particular regard to the availability of outdoor amenity space at the host property, and the outlook from neighbouring properties.

Procedural Matter

3. The Council's decision refers to the Borough of Broxbourne Local Plan Second Review 2001-2011 (December 2005) and the Local Plan 2018-2033 post examination version (May 2020). However, the former is now superceded, and has been replaced by policies in the now adopted Broxbourne Local Plan 2018 to 2033 (June 2020) ('BLP'). I have therefore considered this scheme against the BLP policies.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. No 1 Laburnum Road ('No 1') forms the end unit in a short terrace, which is located at the junction with Oliver Close. Dwellings in the area are typically two storeys high, terraced or semi-detached, with a primarily rendered finish, a hipped roof, and a short rear garden. Whilst some have been extended, they are mostly modestly proportioned, with a rectilinear plan form, and an uncomplicated appearance. These characteristics contribute to the area's cohesion and local character.

5. No 1 has a two storey, rendered side extension which reflects the form and materials of the host property. The appeal proposal would include a flat-roofed ground floor rear projection, with a narrower, hipped roofed storey above.
6. The proposed extension would have a modest depth, it would be subordinate to the host, and its roof would be set down. However, cumulatively with the previous extension, the resultant dwelling's scale and proportions would significantly exceed most others in the local area. That would be particularly apparent in views from Oliver Close, and from the rear of nearby properties on Lilac Road. From there the scale and bulk of No 1, together with its complex design, would jar with the much more limited bulk and simpler style of other properties in the area.
7. To some extent, the tall hedgerow on the boundary between No 1 and 3 Laburnum Road ('No 3') limits the extent to which the rear elevation of this terrace can be viewed as a whole. However, the proposed two storey element would be taller than that hedgerow, which I cannot be certain would be retained at that height.
8. The appellant has referred to permitted extensions elsewhere, including one close to this site at 6 Laburnum Road. However, that part single/part two storey extension is atypical of the area and, given its location in the middle of a row, is significantly less visible from public vantage points than would be the case here. From the evidence before me, and that of my visit, I am not aware of nearby prominently located terraced properties that have been extended in a similar form, and to a similar extent, as would be the case here.
9. For the above reasons, the scheme would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would therefore conflict with BLP Policies DSC1 and DSC2 which, amongst other things, require a high standard of design which enhances local character and distinctiveness; and that the scale, design and external appearance of extensions do not unduly impact upon the parent building and the wider setting.
10. Whilst the scheme would make an effective use of the land, as it would not safeguard the environment it would not fully meet the requirements at sections 11 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('Framework').

Living conditions

11. The footprint of the proposed development would occupy a small proportion of the host property's rear garden. Whilst the retained garden would fall short of the space standards in the Council's Borough-Wide Supplementary Planning Guidance 2013 ('SPG'), it would be reasonably private, broadly commensurate in size with other gardens in the area, and it would provide space for the occupants to sit outside, hang washing or undertake typical outdoor domestic tasks. As a result, the scheme would not result in unacceptable living conditions for the occupants of the host property.
12. Whilst the Council's decision sets out that there would be an adverse impact upon the amenity and outlook of neighbouring properties, that stance is not reflected in its officer report, where it notes that the proposal would not impinge on the 'angle criteria' in its SPG.
13. For my part, I note that the two storey section of the proposal would be set well in from the plot's side boundaries, with only the much lower, flat-roofed

section abutting the boundary with No 3. As a consequence of that, and the extension's limited depth, the proposal would not impact the outlook from No 3 to a harmful degree, or cause those occupants to experience a significant loss of light. Given that other properties are further from the site, their occupants would experience less of an impact on their living conditions.

14. As BLP Policies DSC1 and DSC2 mainly address matters of design, they are of limited relevance on this issue. However, the scheme would not conflict with their broad approach of ensuring that development contributes to quality of life, nor with the stance at Framework paragraph 127 f).

Conclusion

15. Summing up, whilst the scheme would not impact the living conditions of existing and future occupiers to a harmful degree, it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Consequently, it would conflict with the development plan and, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR