
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2020

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3254127

7 Meadway, Romford RM2 5NU

- 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 & Mrs Patrick Sweeney against the decision of the London Borough of Havering Council.
 - The application Ref P1747.19, dated 24 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is a Two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council has confirmed that the appeal property is not formally identified as a non-designated heritage asset.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Gidea Park Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

Character and Appearance of CA

4. The appeal property is located within the original Gidea Hall Estate area ('the Estate'). The Estate's significance stems from its origins as it was designed and built following an early 20th Century competition intended to produce a garden suburb of high-quality design and practical housing reflecting the ideals of that time. Within the Arts & Crafts inspired Estate, there is a variety of house type although there is a cohesion with many shared characteristics such as prominent roof profiles including tall chimney stacks, red brick or white rendering with darker tiled roofs.
5. Whilst the property has been previously extended, these additions are single storey. Thus, there have been limited interventions to the original form of the main house; the characteristic architectural features can still be appreciated and there is a sense of proportionality to the dwelling.

6. The proposed rear extension would conceal a substantial portion of the elevation that contains considerable original detail. Its proposed design using double hipped roofs would not be characteristic of the original dwelling. The bulk and mass that would be added would not appear harmonious or subordinate to the house. Rather, the appeal proposal would result in a disproportionate addition that would appear discordant, detracting from the arts and crafts influences of the host dwelling. Furthermore, the addition of a second, wide opening at ground floor level, would detract from the original fenestration pattern that is characteristic of the dwelling. As a consequence of these design components, harm would arise to the identity of the dwelling.
7. Given its overall scale and massing, it would be possible to view the proposed development from some of the adjoining back gardens. As I have found, and irrespective of the use of high-quality materials, it would not respect local distinctiveness, but instead result in a negative effect to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.
8. The existing side gable end to the east side is narrow in width and forms part of the character of the dwelling. The proposal would add significant mass to this elevation. Although an earlier extension may be removed, this would result in no improvement to the appearance of the dwelling in terms of public views. Instead, it would result in the gable elevation appearing unduly wide with a bulky roof form and views experienced from outside the property would be towards a disproportionately large and uncharacteristic extension. It would be further emphasised due to the relationship with the adjacent dwelling of No 9 Meadway and its smaller scale.
9. I have taken into account the extension to 4 Reed Pond Walk and find that this extension would not share the same characteristics as the appeal proposal. That rear extension would be located to an elevation of the dwelling that would be much narrower than the rear elevation of the appeal site that the Inspector concluded contained openings that had been relocated. It would also be set in from each side, allowing around 1m of eaves line to be exposed, and the ridge line lower than the bottom of the chimney stack. As a combination, it would allow the roof to read as it is now, and would create a subservience to the extension. Also, due to the proposed location of that extension, it would be well screened from the street scene with only possible 'fleeting' views. Therefore, the two schemes are not directly comparable.
10. To conclude, due to the unsympathetic design, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Therefore, the proposal would be in conflict with the London Plan policies 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.8 and Policies DC61 and DC68 of the Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and Development Plan Document 2008 in their combined objectives for development to have regard to local character and design, and to protect heritage assets. Moreover, conflict would arise with the Heritage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) April 2011, Residential and Extensions 2011 and the Gidea Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal.
11. Finally, taking into account the words of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of harm to the CA, I quantify that this would be less than substantial. Any harm requires clear and convincing justification and whilst there may be some economic benefits during construction, and other benefits

such as improved living flexibility the dwelling can offer, these benefits would not convincingly outweigh the harm to the heritage asset.

Conclusion

12. All matters considered, for the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR