



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2020

by Alex Hutson MRTPI CMLI MArborA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3259411

Amersham Park House, 111 Amersham Road, Romford RM3 9JA

- 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 Grigor Ziu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0724.20, dated 31 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 29 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'I am building a front porch with dimensions of 3060mm wide x 1580mm depth x 3500mm high (Roof high as walls high are 2600mm high).'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. The Council's decision notice describes the proposal as 'single storey front extension to create a front porch'. Given that the proposal as shown on the submitted plans includes a water closet as well as a porch, it is reasonable to describe it as a front extension and I have considered the appeal on this basis.
3. The proposal has been largely erected but does not appear to have yet been completed. Therefore, for the avoidance of doubt, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans, albeit with the benefit of observing the dimensions of the proposal during the site visit.

Main issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two storey end of terrace dwelling located within a wider residential area. Where dwellings in the locality display front porches or front extensions, these tend to be modest in scale and of a limited depth. This affords such features a recessive and unobtrusive quality which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene and area.
6. I acknowledge that the proposal would utilise materials to match those of the appeal property. In addition, its height would not appear at particular odds with that of other front porches or front extensions in the locality. Nonetheless, the proposal would protrude noticeably further forward than other front porches or

front extensions in the locality. Additionally, it would extend, albeit marginally, beyond the flank wall of the appeal property. Such a depth and width would afford the proposal an overly bulky and visually dominant appearance and would fail to reflect and respect the prevailing pattern of development along Amersham Road. This would give rise to considerable harm to the character and appearance of the area.

7. The appellant has provided some images of other front extensions in support of the proposal. However, one of these relates to a property on a different road (20 Harlesden Close) and the addresses of a further two have not been identified. Furthermore, the example at 48 Amersham Road is some distance from the appeal property, on the opposite side of the road and appeared to me to be of a materially lesser depth than the proposal before me. These examples do not, therefore, justify a planning permission and, in any event, each case should be considered on its own merits.
8. I therefore consider that the proposal would be contrary to Policy DC61 of the London Borough of Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2008 and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan 2016. These policies require, amongst other things, development to maintain, enhance or improve the character and appearance of the local area and to have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street and the scale and mass of surrounding buildings.
9. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance of the London Borough of Havering Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (SPD). The SPD advises, amongst other things, that front extensions should not project more than a metre forward of the main building line and should not detrimentally affect the character of the house and its immediate surroundings.

Other matters

10. The appellant makes reference to guidance for front extensions contained in the 'House Extensions and Garages Planning Guidance Document' which varies from that contained within the SPD. However, I have not been provided with a full copy of this document and it is unclear to me whether it is a document produced by the London Borough of Havering. As such, I am uncertain of its relevance and I afford it little weight.
11. I note the appellant's contention that the provision of a water closet at ground floor level would be a benefit to his elderly parents. However, such a matter is insufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified.
12. Whilst the appellant informs me that he is planning to externally insulate his property, such an alteration would make little difference to the visually dominant appearance of the proposal and, accordingly, this matter thus does not alter my findings on the main issue.

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