



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/W5780/D/20/3258671

91 Clayhall Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford IG5 0PN

- 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 G Boodhun against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1792/20, dated 20 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'Retention of porch'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. The application was made retrospectively. It involves the construction of a porch with a pitched roof and a forward sloping roof / canopy extending over a ground floor bay window and continuing over a side passage with the provision of an access door to this. However, there appears to be some differences between what has been built and what is shown on the proposed plan as submitted. For example, an area of sloping roof has been built to the right of the pitched roof of the porch which is not shown on the proposed elevation drawing. The porch as built also includes a west facing side window which does not appear to be shown on the proposed ground floor drawing. Therefore, and for the avoidance of doubt, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the proposed plans before me, albeit with the benefit of observing the porch as built which appears to broadly reflect the dimensions of that as shown on the proposed plans.
3. The Council highlights some discrepancies between the existing plans and some elements of the appeal property prior to the recent construction works and has provided a photograph to demonstrate this. For example, the existing plans suggest that the front door and a wall to the right of this would have been flush with the wall of the single storey front bay. However, the photograph shows that the front door and the wall to the right of this were recessed. I have considered the appeal on this basis.

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 semi-detached dwelling located within a predominantly residential area. It displays a two storey front bay feature similar to other dwellings in the locality. Where other dwellings have porches / front extensions, these tend to be of a modest depth and to not extend beyond the front bay features, maintaining their prominence. This would have been the case with the appeal property prior to the recent construction works. The modest depth of porches / front extensions and the prominence of the two storey bay features of dwellings contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
6. The guidance of the recently adopted Redbridge Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document 2019 (SPD) notes that the front of a house is a prominent feature of the street scene and that any alterations should be proportionate in scale and sympathetic in character to minimise visual impact. To achieve this, the SPD advises that where a bay window exists, a porch must not extend beyond the depth of the bay and should have a separation distance of at least 0.3 metres (m) from it.
7. The porch element of the proposal would extend considerably further forward than the depth of the two storey front bay feature of the appeal property. In addition, it would only maintain a separation distance of 0.25m from it. The proposed porch would thus detract noticeably from the prominence of the two storey bay feature and would appear at considerable odds with the prevailing pattern of development in the locality. It would therefore result in an incongruous addition to the appeal property and would give rise to considerable harm to the character and appearance of the area. This is notwithstanding that it would utilise materials to match those of the appeal property or that it would have a pitched roof to match the gable above the two storey front bay feature.
8. Whilst the appellant suggests that a canopy over the proposed porch could be reduced by 0.3m in depth, this would make little difference to the harm I have identified and, in any event, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans. I also note the appellant's contention that the proposed porch would protrude to the extent proposed to accommodate access to an internal staircase. Nonetheless, the existing plans show that an internal staircase would have been accessed from the hall prior to the recent construction works and I therefore afford little weight to this matter.
9. In light of the above, I consider that the proposal, given the excessive dimensions of the proposed porch, would be contrary to Policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 adopted 2018. These policies require, amongst other things, development to respect the local character of the area, to complement the character of the host building and to maintain or improve the appearance of the locality and street scene. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance of the SPD for the reasons already mentioned.

Conclusion

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

Alex Hutson INSPECTOR