



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2020

by A Thompson BSc BTP MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 January 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3255847

41 Parkland Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2EX

- 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 Angela Dynan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0288.20, dated 21 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is part first floor and part single storey side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development used in the Council's decision notice, which I note was adopted by the appellant, as this best describes the proposed development.
3. The Council and the appellant have advised that in 2016 an application for the erection of a rear ground floor extension, and to rebuild the ground floor side garage and convert it to habitable space, with a first-floor extension over and a new porch was submitted for 41 Parkland Avenue. This application was refused planning permission and a subsequent planning appeal was dismissed in 2017.
4. Both main parties have referred to, and made comparisons with, the 2017 appeal (the earlier scheme). Given this and the similarities between the current proposals and the earlier scheme, the previous appeal decision is a material consideration in this case.

Main Issue

5. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the semi-detached pair of dwellings and the street scene.

Reasons

6. As the Planning Inspector for the earlier scheme noted this part of Parkland Avenue is characterised by pairs of semi-detached and detached dwellings set back from the street in a spacious suburban setting. The gaps between buildings on the side of the street in the vicinity of No.41 offer views of the mature parkland vegetation beyond, which contribute to the verdant quality of the area.

7. The appellant argues that there are 4 primary differences between the current appeal proposals and the earlier scheme. Taken together these changes would reduce the overall bulk of the first-floor side extension compared to the earlier scheme. But, because these changes would not substantively alter the height or the width of the proposed first-floor side extension when viewed from the road, they would not satisfactorily address the fundamental concerns raised in relation to the earlier scheme about the impact of a substantial side extension on the spaciousness between dwellings and the symmetry of paired properties.
8. The proposed first floor side extension would result in a two-storey development close to the common site boundary that would significantly narrow the gap between the buildings at No.41 and No.43 Parkland Avenue. Although the overall ridge height would be reduced nearest the boundary, the stepped ridgeline feature proposed relates poorly to the design of the front elevation and would not significantly reduce the overall impact of the extension in terms of its relationship with No.43.
9. Given the proximity of an existing 2-storey element of No.43 to the common boundary, the proposed side extension, even when stepped back by 1 metre compared with the adjoining front elevations, would introduce a clear terracing effect that would be substantially at odds with, and harmful to, the pattern of gaps between non-paired buildings that are characteristic of this part of the street.
10. Furthermore, as the adjoining semi-detached property at No 39 has not benefitted from a first-floor side extension, the provision of such an extension on No.41 would upset the balance and harmonious appearance of the neighbouring properties.
11. In short, I find that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the semi-detached pair of dwellings and the street scene. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policy DC61 of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and the Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)(2011).
12. Policy DC61 requires that planning permission should only be granted to development which maintains, enhances or improves the character and appearance of the local area and the SPD emphasises the importance of having regard to issues such as symmetry and the spacing between buildings when designing alterations and extensions.

Other considerations

13. One element of the proposals would be to provide a single storey side/rear infill extension. The extension would effectively extend the current single storey rear extension across almost the full width of the building. This element of the proposals would match the existing extension in terms of scale, design and materials and would not harm the character and appearance of the host building or the wider area.
14. However, I share the Council's concerns that the submitted plans appear inconsistent in terms of the depth of No.43 identified and are also unclear in terms of the height of the development in relation to buildings at No.43 and thus it is not possible to fully assess the impact of the proposed development

on the amenity of the adjoining owners. In addition, I am far from clear that the two elements of the proposed extension are clearly severable and neither main party has requested I consider a split decision. Given these considerations I have considered the proposals as a single scheme.

Conclusion

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

Anthony Thompson

INSPECTOR