



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2020

by R.Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/20/3257953

228 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford RM6 6LS

- 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 A Sohl against the decision of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 20/00332/FUL, dated 9 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of double storey rear/side extension to existing building to create a split level 1No. bedroom flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of future occupiers, with regard internal space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. No.228 High Road (No.228) is located at one end of two short rows of terraced properties that front High Road. The terrace is fairly uniform in appearance and character with retail and commercial units at ground floor and gable features with projecting bays to the flats at first floor. No.228 returns the corner of High Road and Whalebone Lane South with a chamfered corner facing the busy and prominent junction. It has a newsagent at ground floor with an existing flat at first floor.
4. The proposal is to extend No.228 over two-storeys in an L-shape configuration into the rear service yard providing a 1 bedroom flat over two-storeys. Because of the shape of the site, the extension would be set well back from the front elevation by around 5.9m wrapping around an existing two-storey rear wing. It would not therefore be particularly discernible when viewed in the context of the terrace from High Road itself.

5. However, whilst set back from the front elevation, the proposed extension would project forward of the building line on the Whalebone Lane South return by around 3m and would be offset from the boundary by a maximum of only around 1m. Because of this significant step in the building line, the extension would appear a bulky and somewhat clumsy addition to the host property.
6. By wrapping round the existing rear wing, the return of the property to Whalebone Lane South would dominate No.228 in a very visible location, prominent from the High Road, Whalebone Lane junction. I saw from my site visit that there are a mix of styles and size of development blocks in this location, including the six-storey building opposite. However, when viewed from the junction the proposed extension would be seen in the context of the terrace which it forms part. It would unbalance the composition of that terrace causing harm to its uniform character and appearance.
7. The height to ridge of the proposed roof would match the existing rear wing, lower than the main roof, and would have a similar profile. The roof itself may appear subordinate to the host property, but this does not mitigate the incongruous side extension. I find this to be an unsympathetic addition that would dominate the appearance of the host property.
8. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016) (LP) and Policies BP11 and BP8 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document (2011) (DPD) in so far as they require development to have regard to, protect or enhance the character and amenity of an area. These principles of good design are also reflected in Policy D4 of the Publication London Plan (December 2020) (PLP) and the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
9. Policy DM16 of the Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Version (November 2019) (DLP) referred to by the Council relates to householder extensions and alterations and is not applicable here.

Living conditions

10. The proposed flat would be arranged with an L-shaped living and kitchen area at ground floor, with a bedroom and bathroom at first floor. Whilst the layout would produce regular shaped rooms, it is unclear where built in storage could be accommodated and the overall floor area would be only 53.28sqm, according to the appellant. This falls below the minimum space standard of 58sqm for a 1 bedroom 2 person 2-storey dwelling stipulated by Policy 3.5 of the London Plan (2016) (LP) and the *Technical housing standard – nationally described space standard* (2015) (NDSS). Whilst the appellant finds this a 'short reduction' it equates to around a total 8% shortfall.
11. The proposed bedroom has a floor area of around 15.8sqm which exceeds the NDSS minimum floor area of 11.5sqm for a double bedroom. The shortfall against standards therefore is concentrated in the living area which, whilst benefitting from two windows, I am not persuaded would be spacious or provide a good size living area, as suggested by the appellant.
12. I therefore find the proposal would not afford a good standard of living accommodation for future occupiers contrary to LP Policy 3.5, DLP Policy D6 and paragraph 127 of the Framework. The Council's decision refers to Policy

DM3 of the DLP, however, this policy relates to proposals for specialist housing and it is not therefore relevant to the case before me.

Other Matters

13. The proposal would provide an additional dwelling in a sustainable location that would make a small contribution to the general need for more housing in London. However, whilst a benefit, this would not outweigh the harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions for future occupiers.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above, the appeal is dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR