

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2021

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3262960

482 Upper Brentwood Road, Romford RM2 6JB

- 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 John Harvey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0919.20, dated 1 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is two-storey side extension, single-storey rear and single-storey front extensions. New boundary fence.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council considers that the rear and front extensions are generally acceptable and its concern is limited to the two-storey side extension. I see no reason to disagree and have framed the main issue accordingly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the two-storey side extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling which occupies a corner location such that the side of the building is prominent in views from both Upper Brentwood Road and Cambridge Avenue. The front corner of the proposed side extension would be hard up against the side boundary adjoining the Cambridge Road footpath. By virtue of the slightly tapered site boundary, the rear corner of the extension would be set in a short distance from the footpath. Nevertheless, the extension would not comply with paragraph 6.12 of the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which requires side extensions on corner plots to be set in 1m from the side boundary.
 5. The overall effect of the proposed extension would create an imposing two-storey flank wall very close to the footpath and would run almost the full length of the existing building. The effect would not be relieved by any set back or articulation of the wall and little in the way of fenestration. The side extension would, therefore, have an overbearing effect on users of the adjoining
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footpath, notwithstanding that it would take up a relatively short section of the length of the footpath as a whole.

6. The spaciousness of the Upper Brentwood Road/Cambridge Avenue junction is locally distinctive. This spaciousness is derived from the space around buildings within individual plots, as well as from the width of the highway itself. Although the two-storey element of the side extension to the property opposite at No 484 is set in from the boundary, it has already reduced the spaciousness to a degree. The proposed side extension, being positioned so close to the site boundary, would significantly further reduce the spaciousness of the junction to the point where its local distinctiveness would be unacceptably diminished. In that respect, the proposed extension can be distinguished from the extension to No 484 where the space retained to the side boundary does contribute to the spaciousness of the junction.
7. The appellant contends that the Council accepts the principle of a side extension to the appeal property and that setting it in marginally from the side boundary in order to meet the aims of the SPD would not materially alter its effect on the street scene. There is nothing to indicate what distance is meant by 'marginally'. However, I consider that setting in the extension from the boundary in accordance with the SPD would materially alter its impact.
8. The appellant also contends that the shape of the appeal site means that it is less able to adhere to the SPD than the extension at No 484. However, each proposal must be considered on its merits and having regard to the individual characteristics of the site. Those characteristics may indeed mean that one site is less able than another to accommodate a particular form of development.
9. The SPD is clearly intended to apply specifically to residential extensions and alterations. The fact that it does not apply to new buildings, where other policy or guidance may be relevant, does not alter the weight that can be attached to it.
10. Overall therefore, I find that the proposed side extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would conflict with Policy DC61 of the Council's Core Strategy and Development Control Policies 2008. Amongst other things, this policy requires proposals to respond to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development and respect the scale and massing of the surrounding physical context. Nor would the proposal accord with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 127 to the extent that it has similar aims. I have already found that the side extension would not comply with paragraph 6.12 of the SPD.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR