
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2020

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26/02/2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/20/3261136

57 Askwith Road, Rainham, RM13 8EL

- 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 Enea Tanku against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
- The application Ref P0960.20, dated 6 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 September 2020.
- The development proposed is described as "*Conversion of existing bungalow into a 2-storey dwelling house, involving the following:*"
 - *the creation of an additional floor, the incorporation of a rear extension element to the additional floor, minor alteration to window styles on all elevations, the introduction of a central arch to the front elevation (approved under application p1837.19)*
 - *construction of single-storey rear extension with an overall depth of 8.0 metres, a maximum height of 3.0 metres, and eaves height of 3.0 metres (approved under application y0346.19)*
 - *construction of part double-storey side extension*
 - *extending rear extension to connect to the garage".*

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 area, and upon the living conditions at 59 Askwith Road, with particular regard to daylight, sunlight, and visual impact.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow located on the west side of Askwith Road, a residential street comprising a mix of property types, ages, and styles. Planning permission was given in June 2020 for conversion of the bungalow into a two-storey dwelling (Ref P1837.19). That permission has not been implemented but remains extant. My attention has also been drawn to a decision in December 2019 (Ref Y0346.19). This confirmed that prior approval from the Council was not required for a single-storey rear extension to the bungalow with an overall depth of 8m.

4. The appeal proposal effectively seeks to replicate the form of the planning permission already given for converting the bungalow into a two-storey dwelling but also including a deep single-storey extension that would be broadly similar to that allowed to be constructed to the existing building as permitted development. However, there are two principal differences between the appeal proposal and the previous proposed developments. Firstly, it is proposed to widen the footprint of the existing building by extending it at two-storey up to the common side boundary with No 59 Askwith Road. Secondly, the single-storey element would project deeper and would link to an existing garage located to the rear and positioned along the boundary with No 59. The garage would become an integral part of the dwelling.

Character and Appearance

5. The outward appearance of the remodelled dwelling would directly resemble the form approved under permission P1837.19 when seen within the street scene. Mindful of this, it is difficult to understand the Council's aversion to the height and detailing of the proposed resulting dwelling, or why wholesale changes to the form of the existing bungalow are considered to now be unacceptable. However, the previous permission simply built upon the footprint of the existing bungalow, thereby maintaining gaps between each side of the building and the respective side boundaries of the plot. It is now proposed to extend the building sideways, projecting it towards No 59 and up to the common boundary between both properties.
6. Despite the variety and mix of dwelling types along Askwith Road, with no particular rhythm to the style of the architecture, there are important gaps between buildings, be they detached properties, semi-detached pairs, or terraces. For detached buildings in particular, I saw that most have gaps of at least approximately 1m to each side, allowing dwellings to sit comfortably, not only on their own individual plots, but also in relation to neighbouring dwellings. In my opinion, this is important given the significant differences in styles between many adjoining buildings, especially to this side of Askwith Road.
7. The loss of the gap to the boundary with No 59 would be out of step with the general pattern of development along Askwith Road. Moreover, this would result in an uncomfortably close relationship with No 59 which would be further exaggerated by the increased two-storey scale and height of the appeal property compared with the single-storey height of the neighbouring dwelling and the recessed position of No 59 at this point. Due to the proximity of the side extension to the side boundary of the site, the proposal would fail to maintain, enhance, or improve the character and appearance of the local area. In this regard it would conflict with Policy DC61 - *Urban Design* of the Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) 2008. It would also conflict with Policies 7.4 *Local Character* and 7.6 *Architecture* of the London Plan 2016 (LP) insofar as these relate to quality of design and respect for local context.

Living Conditions at 59 Askwith Road

8. No 59 is set away from the side boundary of the appeal site by around 1m and has been extended to the rear at single-storey. This rear addition extends

close to the rear detached garage to No 59 and has a chamfered outside edge with a gate spanning the gap between both buildings. There is a side window to the original flank wall of No 59, which appeared to be obscurely glazed, and a high-level window to the chamfered wall of the rear extension. There is no evidence before me to suggest that these are primary windows to any important living spaces, and I saw that neither provides any meaningful outlook. Although the increased scale and proximity of the extensions to No 57 would be likely to impact levels of daylight entering these windows to a degree, there is no evidence to demonstrate that this would be significant. There would remain a gap between the buildings that would allow some daylight to continue to penetrate these windows. Although No 59 is directly north of the appeal site, the two flank windows are already largely in shadow from the existing arrangement of buildings. The proposed extensions would have little further impact upon levels of sunlight to these windows.

9. The garden to No 59 immediately adjacent to the rear elevation of the dwelling is already enclosed by the existing arrangements of buildings. The outlook to the rear of No 59 would be unaffected by the scale of the proposed side extension or the depth of the rear extension. Whilst I recognise that the combined length of the flank elevation to No 57 would run for a significant distance along the boundary between the properties, I was unable to detect any impact upon the neighbour's living conditions that would be harmful. I am mindful also of the support offered by the adjoining occupier in favour of the proposal.
10. Overall, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the living conditions at 59 Askwith Road. As such I find no conflict with DPD Policy DC61 where it deals with the impact of development upon existing properties, or with any policies of the LP which do likewise.

Conclusion

11. Notwithstanding my findings with regard to the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions at 59 Askwith Road, for the reasons given, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR