



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2021

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/21/3275154

146 Birch Crescent, Hornchurch, RM11 2NG

- 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 Michael K against the decision of London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P1871.20, dated 9 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is two storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development on the decision notice is slightly different to that on the application form. I have adopted the former as it more accurately describes the appeal proposal.
3. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework). However, the policies that are relevant to this appeal have not changed and there was no need, therefore, to invite the parties to make further submissions in response to the revised Framework.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and streetscene.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi detached property with gardens to the front and back, located on the southern side of Birch Crescent. There are similar pairs of semi-detached properties opposite and to the south and east of the appeal site. Further to the north west, on Birch Crescent, the properties are terraced and their style, age and design also differ. There are no existing extensions on the front of the appeal site. However, No. 144 Birch Crescent, which forms the other half of the semi with the appeal site, has a single storey porch extension.
6. Paragraphs 7.4 – 7.6 (inclusive) of the Havering Residential Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (March 2011) (SPD) states that large front extensions are generally unacceptable due to the adverse effect

they can have on the appearance of the host property and the character of the street. It further states that in exceptional circumstances a front extension may be acceptable, where, for example, there is an irregular building line, but that in those circumstances the extension should not project more than one metre forward of the main building line, and must be designed to match the host property in terms of its detailing and materials.

7. The appeal proposal is for a two storey extension to part of the front elevation of the host property. The submitted plans show that the extension would project approximately 2 metres from the main front wall of the host property on the ground and first floor, and would be approximately 3.32 metres wide with a hipped roof.
8. The Council's Delegated Report states that whilst there are examples of two storey extensions on this part of Birch Crescent, these extensions only project 1 metre from the main front wall of those properties. These examples include 150 Birch Crescent (No.150) (ref. P0261.09) and 117 Birch Close (No. 117) (ref. P1853.18). Whilst the extension at No.150 was approved prior to the adoption of the SPD, as with the approved extension at No.117, the Council confirm that it only extends 1 metre from the main wall of that property. The Appellant has not challenged these findings or provided examples of larger two storey front extensions in this part of Birch Crescent.
9. Within this context and the staggered building line that exists in this part of Birch Crescent, the combined depth, height and mass of the proposed extension would, in my judgement, unbalance and upset the appearance and rhythm of the host property and this pair of semi-detached properties. The proposal would compete with the host building and would not be subordinate to it, resulting in an extension that would be overly dominant and highly visible within the streetscene. It would also be unsympathetic to and would fail to harmonise with the original form of the host building and its semi-detached neighbour, resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
10. Other than the examples of two storey extensions provided by the Council, there appear to be no two storey extensions in this part of the street that project 2 metres beyond the main front wall. The need for a larger extension than that set out in the SPD has not, therefore, been met or justified. As a consequence, the appeal proposal would, in my judgement, result in an uncharacteristic addition to the streetscene that would be visually intrusive.
11. The Appellant contends that the appeal proposal would not result in the overdevelopment of the site, that it would secure a high quality layout and environment for future occupiers, that the resulting density of development would be appropriate and that the building would be more energy efficient. That maybe so, but those considerations do not affect the findings I have reached above.
12. The Appellant also contends that the appeal proposal would comply with various policies in the Unitary Development Plan. However, I have not been provided with copies of any of these policies and it is, therefore, unclear to me whether these policies have been 'saved' or whether they are relevant to the appeal proposal. Reference has also been made by the Appellant to minimum room sizes and noise transmission between flats, neither of which again

appears relevant to the appeal proposal that is before me, which is for a two storey front extension to an existing dwelling.

13. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would be contrary to paragraphs 7.4 - 7.6 (inclusive) of the SPD, policy DC61 of the Havering Core Strategy & Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2008) and policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2021). These seek to ensure that residential extensions complement or improve the character of an area, harmonise with the host property and the streetscene, and respond positively to the proportions of the host building and surrounding properties. These policies are consistent with those in the revised Framework. The appeal proposal fails to meet these policy objectives, resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and streetscene.

Conclusions

14. For the reasons given above and having taken all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR