

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 22 July 2021

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/20/3263126

519-527 Gale Street, Dagenham RM9 4TP

- 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 Yoel Rosenthal - Smartrose Estates Ltd. against the decision of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01827/FULL, dated 13 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is alterations to existing first floor flat, incorporating a rear infill extension, and the erection of a two-storey roof extension to create 9 additional units (3 x 1 bedroom units, 4 x 2 bedroom 3 person units and 2 x 2 bedroom 4 person units).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the period since the appeal was submitted the Government has published the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) July 2021 which is being brought into immediate effect for the purposes of decision-making. The London Plan (March 2021) (LP) has also been published during this period. The parties have been provided with an opportunity to provide comments as to whether either of these events has relevance to the appeal. I have taken any comments received into account as part of my assessment.
3. The Council's decision notice refers to several policies within the Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19 Consultation Version, October 2020). However, as the Draft Local Plan may be subject to further change, I attach limited weight to these policies.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal building forms part of a mixed-use parade on Gale Street and is located within a neighbourhood centre within the Becontree Estate. The stepped roof form of the neighbouring three-storey parade corresponds with the topography of the street which slopes down from Becontree Station towards the appeal building. Whilst there is variation in the degree of the step, the two-storey appeal building and the attached flat roofed unit to the south continue this stepped building form. The appeal building and the parade to the

north also have shared characteristics insofar as their front elevations are similarly aligned, with pale facing materials to upper floors and flat parapets substantively screening sunken hipped roof forms. Overall, these factors give general consistency to the appearance, scale and rhythm of built form within the neighbourhood centre and distinctiveness to the street scene.

6. The roof extension would sit above the roofline of the adjacent section of the neighbouring three-storey building. The contrasting dark grey cladding panels to the elevations of the fourth storey would differentiate the extension from the rest of the parade and increase its prominence within the skyline. Even accounting for the position of the fourth storey set back from the front elevation, the height and mass of the roof extension and the materials incorporated would result in a visually dominant and bulky addition which would sit awkwardly within the distinctive stepped building form of the wider parade. The disparities in appearance, scale and form would appear incongruous to anyone approaching the site along Gale Street towards the Hedgemans Road / Woodward Road junction and from the brow of the hill in the vicinity of Becontree Station.
7. My attention has been drawn to an extant planning permission on the site which also incorporates a roof extension. However, the evidence before me indicates that a fourth storey is not included in the approved scheme and that a stepped relationship with the neighbouring parade would be retained in that instance. Therefore, the fallback position of the extant planning permission is not comparable to the proposal before me.
8. I conclude the development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. In that regard, the development would not accord with the design requirements of Policy D4 (Delivering Good Design) of the LP, Policies CP2 (Protecting and Promoting our Historic Environment) and CP3 (High Quality Built Environment) of the Barking and Dagenham Core Strategy (2010) (DPD), Policies BP2 (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) and BP11 (Urban Design) of the Barking and Dagenham Borough Wide Development Policies (2011). The proposal would also conflict with the requirements in the Framework for developments to be of a good design which is sympathetic to local character.
9. The Council's decision also refers to Policy HC1 (Heritage and conservation growth) of the LP. Whilst I have not been provided with a copy of this policy, this does not alter my findings that the proposal would conflict with the above policies of the development plan.

Other Matters

10. I acknowledge that the development plan and the Framework seek amongst other things to significantly boost housing supply and promote the vitality and viability of town centres. From what I saw on site I also find no reason to find that the proposal would result in any harm to the living conditions of existing and potential future occupiers. Even so, these factors do not justify the significant harm identified under the main issue.
11. From the evidence before me, the future intentions of the owners of the neighbouring three storey parade in terms of potentially utilising permitted development rights for the creation of additional storeys is unknown. Any such proposals on this neighbouring building would need to be considered on their

own merits. Therefore, I must assess the appeal proposal on the basis of the existing site circumstances.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR