

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2021

by Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2021

Appeal Ref. APP/W5780/D/21/3274360
18 Rayleigh Road, Woodford Green IG8 7HG

- 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 Donald Espeute against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application ref. 4282/20, dated 15 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "*Single storey rear extension and double side extension*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for "*Single storey rear extension and double side extension*" at 18 Rayleigh Road, Woodford Green IG8 7HG in accordance with the terms of the application ref. 4282/20, dated 15 December 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans numbered A-101, A-102, A-200, A-201, A-202 and A-203.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matter

2. In July 2021, after the submission of this appeal, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published, replacing the 2019 edition. I have had regard to this document, but it is evident that the substance of the Framework, as it relates to the sole main issue in this case, has not changed. In such circumstances, I am satisfied that there is no requirement to seek the views of the parties on the revised Framework, and that in taking such an approach no prejudice to any party would arise.

Main issue

3. The Council has not raised any objections to the single-storey rear extension. I see no reason to disagree with that stance. I therefore consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed 2-storey side extension upon the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene.

Reasons

4. Rayleigh Road is comprised of a variety of predominantly 2-storey semi-detached houses. This includes nos 18 and 20, which have an advanced and prominent shared gable end facing the road, with the remainder of each dwelling being under a lower hipped roof wing set back about 3.4 m from the front of the gable end, presenting a secondary element to the elevations facing the road. There are 3 other pairs of dwellings with this design between nos 2 and 32 on the same side of the road.
5. It is proposed to add a 2-storey side extension just 2.05 m wide by extending the existing hipped roof across. A gap of 0.35 m would be left between the side wall of this new extension and the boundary with no. 16.
6. The Council's view is that the extension would not be subordinate to the host property as it eschews the guidance in the Council's Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted in September 2019, for the first-floor element to be set back at least 0.5 m from the main front elevation of the house and for the ridge to be set down from the main ridge by no less than 0.5 m. The SPD clearly carries weight as a material consideration in decision making but it should not be applied prescriptively to the exclusion of all other factors, including the physical circumstances and context of a site.
7. Given the modest size of the proposed 2-storey side extension and the fact that it would be added to the hipped wing of the building which is itself a secondary component in the overall built structure, being well set back from and lower than the front gable, I see no reason why the extension cannot be laid out as a simple continuation of that hipped wing as proposed. The paired front gable is the main front elevation and it carries the main roof ridge; this would remain as the dominant architectural feature. The development would appear subordinate to the existing building, when viewed as a whole, in terms of size, scale and height. In this way, the project would not disregard the aims of the SPD. Some additions to side wings could be large enough to unbalance the built form of a dwelling or a pair of semi-detached houses but this scheme would not come close to doing either.
8. The officer's report for the Council says that "The locality is highlighted as Suburban Garden City in the Redbridge Characterisation study and such areas are characterised by a consistent separation between plots and properties to maintain an open character to the street scene." I have not been supplied with a copy of the Redbridge Characterisation study but Rayleigh Road does not really fit well with that general description provided by the Council.
9. Viewing along the length of Rayleigh Road, either side of its junction with Greenstead Avenue, I saw that there are gaps and spaces between the buildings but these are irregular and some are relatively narrow. The gaps at the sides of the 4 distinctive pairs of dwellings featuring the shared advanced gables between nos 2 and 32 are perhaps the most generous but they are few in number and not of fundamental importance to the overall quality of this

rather diverse street scene. Even so, the scheme would maintain a good impression of daylight between the opposing hipped roof wings of nos 16 and 18, would avoid a visually damaging terracing effect and would not result in an unduly cramped form of development. It is important to note that on both approaches to the site, along either of the footways, the feeling of space at the appeal site is actually provided in the main by the absence of built development directly between the side of the front gable and the common boundary with no. 16. This open part of the site would be unaffected by the appeal project.

10. Noting the proposed use of matching white render, red tiles and fenestration details, I consider overall that the proposed 2-storey side extension would make a visually positive contribution to its context and location, exhibit a high standard of architectural design and be sufficiently respectful of and sympathetic to the parent building, local character and the established street scene along Rayleigh Road.
11. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed 2-storey side extension would cause no material harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene.
12. As the development would be an example of high-quality design and complement the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality, there would be no conflict with the broad aims of Policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 or with the Framework insofar as it relates to achieving well-designed places.
13. The scheme will enhance the quality of life for the occupiers of no. 18 by providing additional living accommodation. This is a further factor that weighs in favour of granting planning permission. The Council, correctly in my view, did not identify an excessive loss of amenity for neighbouring properties for any reason, including the passage of light to no. 16. In terms of structural impacts, the appellant will be responsible for the safe development of the site and will be required to comply with the relevant building regulations.
14. In addition to a condition setting a time limit for the commencement of development, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the relevant approved drawings is necessary as this provides certainty. I have also imposed the Council's other suggested condition on materials to ensure that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the dwelling.
15. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

Andrew Dale

INSPECTOR