
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2021

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 October 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/21/3276427

2 Bredle Way, Aveley RM15 4ES

- 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 Mrs Felicity Kelly against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00175/HHA, dated 1 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear and double storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The drawing¹ illustrating the proposed side elevation facing Park Lane is incorrect. To be consistent with the rest of the submitted plans, it should show a 2-storey gable wall. For clarity, I have assessed the proposal on that basis. Although the appellant has indicated that a revised plan would be submitted to address this discrepancy I am not aware that a drawing has been provided.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on highway and pedestrian safety for users of the adjacent highways with particular regard to vehicle parking and on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

Highway safety

4. The appeal property is an end terrace 2-storey house within an estate style residential area. It occupies a corner plot at the entrance to Bredle Way, which is a short residential cul-de-sac with a shared surface and no footways. The main house is sited to one side of the plot with a hard surface area just beyond the flank wall and gardens to both the rear and side of the dwelling.
5. There are on-street vehicle parking restrictions along one side of Park Lane and the entrance into Bredle Way in the form of double yellow lines. I observed several cars were parked within bays on Bredle Way and along Park Lane that in some cases were half on and half off the adjacent footway. From these

¹ Drawing number 0204 dated

observations, there appears to be a good level of demand for on-street parking close to the site, which could be even greater in the evenings and on weekends when more people are likely to be at home. In those circumstances, it is reasonable for the Council to seek to ensure that new development, which would include dwelling extensions, provides sufficient vehicle parking to meet relevant standards so that it does not unduly add to the demand for further on-street parking.

6. The Council states that a dwelling of the size proposed would require 3 off-road parking spaces to meet its parking standard. At the moment, No 2 is served by a single off-road space on Bredle Way, opposite the site. A further parking space is available for visitors just in front of the existing dwelling. This arrangement reflects the approved parking layout for the housing development of which No 2 forms part. As no change is sought to this arrangement, the proposal would fall short of the Council's parking requirement.
7. There would be an additional loss of up to 2 parking spaces on site because the existing hard surface area would be removed to make way for the new side addition. Even so, on balance, I share the appellant's view that the loss of these spaces should not count against the appeal scheme because their provision is over and above the approved requirement and they could be removed at any time. That said, the hard surface area on site is clearly suitable for vehicle parking and its installation is indicative of a need to do so.
8. The Council has previously found an arrangement in which No 2 is served by a dedicated parking space and a parking space for visitors to be acceptable albeit in the context of the wider residential scheme. However, it does not necessarily follow that the same level of parking provision would satisfactorily meet the needs of a larger house with extra rooms, as proposed, because more people that are car users could occupy the property or visit it.
9. Given the size of the completed house with 4-bedrooms, the Council's parking requirement does not seem excessive notwithstanding the relatively low car ownership rates in the local area and taking into account the opportunity for occupiers to cycle, walk or use public transport services. Given the modest level of off-road parking to be provided, it is to my mind likely if not inevitable that the proposal will increase the demand for on-street vehicle parking, and perhaps significantly so.
10. As the site is close to a junction along which parking restrictions apply and Bredle Way has no footways the consequences of introducing additional parked vehicles for others could be significant. Further parking along Bredle Way in the vicinity of the site could hinder or obstruct other road users including pedestrians. It could also lead to hazardous manoeuvres by drivers to avoid parked cars, increasing the risk to pedestrians and other road users. The lack of suitable parking areas close to the site would also result in future occupiers and visitors seeking to park further away causing inconvenience for themselves and other residents if vehicles are parked close to neighbouring drives, on or near bends or mounted on footways.
11. For all of these reasons, the proposal would cause harm to the safety and convenience of users of the adjacent highways. In reaching these conclusions, I acknowledge that others raise no objection. I am also not aware of any plans to introduce further on-street parking restrictions in the local area.

12. On the first main issue, I conclude that the proposal would add to on-street parking demand and present a safety hazard to other roads users and pedestrians. As such, it conflicts with Policies PMD8 and PMD9 of the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (CS), which note that all development, which includes dwelling extensions, should comply with relevant car parking standards and avoid prejudicing road safety.
13. The appeal scheme is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it requires development to create safe and secure layouts that minimise conflicts between vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians.

Character and appearance

14. The proposed 2-storey side and rear extension would introduce additional built form that would be close to the site's highway frontage with Park Lane. Even so, the appeal scheme would relate well to the style and appearance of the host building with a noticeable gap between the finished building and the footway. Although a sizeable addition, the proposal would not be disproportionate in scale or appear overly bulky.
15. The new extensions would project past the front building line of the properties that address Park Lane, beyond the rear of the site. When seen from Park Lane, in both directions, the proposal would stand further forward of the frontage of these neighbouring properties. The visual effect of this would be to interrupt some views across the site from Park Lane and to diminish the sense of space around one side of the entrance to Bredle Way to some extent.
16. Nevertheless, on the approach to the site along Park Lane especially from the south, the existing dwelling already appears to project beyond the front elevation of these Park Lane properties. As such, the rhythm of the existing built form along one side of Park Lane is already visually disrupted to some extent by the existing house. Furthermore, there is some variety in the existing built form along Park Lane on both sides, and the front build line of the properties beyond the rear of the site is not entirely consistent. Given that variation in layout, which is a characteristic feature of the local area, the proposal would not be an incongruous in the street scene, unduly erode the openness next to the junction, nor would it disrupt the uneven rhythm and building line of the adjacent dwellings along Park Lane.
17. The Council has drawn a comparison between the proposal and a scheme to extend 56 Halt Drive, Linford that was recently dismissed at appeal. Few details of this particular case have been provided and so I cannot be certain that the circumstances are the same or very similar to those of the proposal before me. In any event, I have assessed the proposal on its own merits.
18. On the second main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area. It would therefore comply with CS Policies CSTP22 and PMD2 and the advice within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Alterations and Extensions*. These policies and guidance promote high quality design and aim to ensure that development adds to the character of the local area.
19. My finding on this matter does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the first main issue.

Other matters

20. Once complete, the proposal would provide valuable additional living space that would include an extra bedroom and space for a home office, the benefits of which have come to the fore during the COVID pandemic. There would also be benefits to the local economy through the sale of construction materials and in meeting the needs of the appellant and future occupiers. The new extension would be well insulated and the materials to be used would be from sustainable sources. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR