



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2021

by Kim Langford Tejrar LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons) PGDIP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1ST December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3278654

99 Levett Gardens, Ilford IG3 9BU

- 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 Raj Gadhvi against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge Council.
 - The application Ref 1223/21, dated 22 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is 'Demolish garage. Single storey side rear extension. Front boundary wall with gates and associated landscaping'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development was amended following submission of the application; I have utilised the amended description.
3. The latest iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021. In respect of the main issues for this appeal, I am satisfied that the new iteration of the Framework has broadly the same approach as its previous iteration, and it does not alter my conclusions on the matter in any case.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Bungalow Estate Conservation Area (BECA).

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached bungalow within a modest plot. The bungalow benefits from an attractive and mature rear garden, which proportionate to the modest size of the existing bungalow. The appeal site is situated on Levett Gardens within the BECA and is surrounded by similar semi-detached and detached bungalows in varied sized plots.
6. The BECA Character Appraisal (BECA CA), published in 2014, describes the BECA as comprising of buildings of low heights situated in spacious plots, creating a relaxed and horizontal quality. The BECA CA highlights that both the loose grain, lower density of the area and the variety yet coherent resemblance of the arts and crafts detailing on the bungalow buildings are factors which

contribute towards the special character of the BECA. The BECA CA identifies that the earlier bungalows sit within the most generous plots, in contrast to other bungalows within later narrower and shallower plots. The appeal site is thus identifiable as a later bungalow, as its plot is notably more modest even within the BECA context.

7. The appeal proposal seeks a wrap-around side and rear extension. The proposal would replace the existing garage with the side extension and would thus maintain the original proportions and architectural detailing (except in relation to the porch, which I address below) within the streetscene. It would, however, introduce a significant sprawling development which would overwhelm the original proportions of the bungalow. The dominance of extensions would be further exacerbated by the density and plot coverage of the development within the modest plot.
8. The BECA Design Guide seeks to ensure that development not only maintains a subordinate relationship with the host dwelling, but also to protect the prevailing character of the area. Although the BECA CA focusses particularly on the public realm and notes the contribution to the significance of the BECA made by spacious streets and verdant landscaping, it also highlights that generous plots contribute to the spatially planned character of the area, which positively contributes to the significance of the BECA. The BECA CA notes that backland development and the overdevelopment of sites to exploit the potential space has been resisted thus far and as such, the spacious character of the BECA has been maintained.
9. The private realm of spacious plots makes a positive contribution to the significance of the BECA. Whilst the appeal site does not benefit from a generous plot, the overdevelopment of the plot due to the sprawling scale of the proposed development would be incongruous with the spacious character and of the BECA.
10. The bungalows to the eastern side of the appeal site have sizeable modern extensions to the side and rear, as have other bungalows within the wider BECA. The bungalows to the eastern side of the appeal site maintain the modest proportions and traditional architectural detailing to the front, but from the rear they appear modern, sprawling and massive due to the degree of extension and alteration they have undergone. Notably, both of those bungalows appear to benefit from larger plots than the appeal site. The bungalow adjacent to the appeal site is a particularly poor example of insensitive development, as it has unfinished exposed blockwork despite its apparent age. Information relating to the planning status and application history of these properties is not before me, however, I have considered the appeal on its individual merits. The original proportions of those bungalows, and others similarly extended in the vicinity has been lost. Whilst the Appellant might understandably wish to achieve the same level of development as at other properties in the vicinity, the incremental increase in size of bungalows by disproportionate extension and a proliferation of such extensions would lead to a cumulative erosion of the characteristic spacious plots and would result in substantial harm to the BECA.
11. The characteristic architectural detailing of the front entrance within the BECA is an open recessed arch, leading to the front door. There are unfortunately several instances nearby of the installation of modern projecting porches of

various types or the infilling of the open arch with a door. These arts and crafts architectural details are recognised as contributing to the significance of the BECA. The original arch at the appeal site has been infilled with a glazed door, which has to some extent eroded an original arts and crafts architectural feature of the bungalow; however, the original form of the arch remains legible within the public realm. The appeal proposal would completely cover the arch with a rectangular canopy porch; thus erasing the legibility of the original architectural feature within the public realm, resulting in additional harm to the BECA.

12. For these reasons, I consider that the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the BECA and would result in less than substantial harm to this heritage asset, affecting its significance. The public benefit arising from the proposal would be the provision of a private extended dwelling for the bungalow's occupants. However, the harm to the BECA, site and character of the surrounding area, to which I attach significant weight, clearly outweighs this limited benefit, contrary to policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan, adopted 2018, policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan, adopted 2021, as well as the guidance within the Framework. These policies seek, amongst other things, to secure high-quality design that preserves or enhances local distinctiveness and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Conclusions

13. For the reasons stated above, I find that the appeal proposal would fail to maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the BECA, resulting in less than substantial harm which is not outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would conflict with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, as well as the guidance in the Framework, and I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Langford Tejrar

INSPECTOR