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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2021

**by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 10 DECEMBER 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3280192**

**57 Monkams Drive, WOODFORD GREEN, IG8 0LE**

- 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 S Creese against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
  - The application Ref 0452/21, dated 2 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2021.
  - The development proposed is described as the demolition of a side extension roof, the construction of a first-floor side and rear extension, and construction of a first-floor side dormer and rear loft dormer, together with roof and fenestration alterations.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of a side extension roof, the construction of a first-floor side and rear extension, and construction of a rear loft dormer, together with roof and fenestration alterations at 57 Monkams Drive, WOODFORD GREEN, IG8 0LE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 0452/21, dated 2 February 2021, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
  - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans all originally dated 27 January 2021: 1AR-0-001, 1AR-0-103, 1AR-0-201, 1AR-0-202, 1AR-0-301, 1AR-100, all dated 27 January 2021; 1AR-0-100, 1AR-0-101, 1AR-0-102, all Rev 1 and dated 8 February 2021; 1AR-101, 1AR-102, 1AR-103, 1AR-201, 1AR-202, 1AR-301, 1AR-302, 1AR-401 all Rev 1 and dated 14 May 2021.
  - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

### Procedural Matter

2. From the final version of plans, as listed on the Council's decision notice, it would appear that the proposed first-floor side dormer no longer forms part of the proposal, since it is not shown on the floor plans or elevations. I have therefore omitted this element of the description of the proposed development in my decision paragraph above.

## **Main Issue**

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area (CA) in general, and the area around Monkams Drive in particular.

## **Reasons**

4. The appeal property (No 57) is a large detached house situated on the western side of Monkams Drive, close to its junction with Princes Avenue. The houses on this side of the road are all large detached houses with a degree of commonality of basic design. Nearly all have part half-timbered front elevations including a large forward projecting gable extension, and some have cat-slide roof features to the side of the gable. No 57 has a wider plot than most and has a wide single-storey extension to its northern side, projecting to the plot boundary with No 59, which is set at 90 degrees to No 57 and is separated from it by its long rear garden. The appeal property is situated close to the north-eastern boundary of the CA.
5. The proposed development would include the demolition of the side extension roof and the construction of a first-floor side extension above the existing ground floor extension.
6. Policy LP26 of the Council's Local Plan (LP) indicates that the Council will promote high quality design in the borough by requiring that development, amongst other things, respects the local character of the area and is well integrated and has regard to and respect for the surrounding area, in terms of form, style, massing, scale, materials, and design. Policy LP30 indicates that the Council will support householder development that complements the character of the building, particularly in terms of scale, style, form and materials and is subordinate to the existing building in terms of size, scale or height. Policy LP33 indicates that in Conservation Areas, the Council will protect the borough's heritage assets by supporting development proposals within such areas which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
7. The Council contends that the proposed first-floor side extension and roof would not be a subservient addition to this example of a large Edwardian house, detracting from the prominence of the front gable feature and the catslide roof design on other side due to its size, bulk and massing, with the roof extension cutting across the chimney breast. The side extension would be readily visible from the street and, therefore, would detract from the appearance of the locality (characterised by relatively modest upper-level side extensions) and would undermine the character of the wider CA.
8. The appellant contends that the current proposal is the result of long discussions with the Council officers, during which the plans have gone through a number of iterations. He believes the final plans are in keeping with the character of the existing property, such that the extensions are modest and subservient to the original building, and the side extension is set so far back from the road to be barely visibly other than from a very limited front-on angle. He contends that the exterior will match the existing design and that the extension has been set back significantly to expose most of the existing chimney.

9. I have little detail regarding the Character Appraisal of the CA, but it would appear that the significance of the CA is derived largely from the Edwardian housing. The appraisal indicates only that the residential properties are large detached and semi-detached properties, many of which have been individually detailed or form small clusters with rich Edwardian decorative features. No. 57 is a good example of a large Edwardian house and makes a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area.
10. In this case, the appeal property comprises a very wide plot with a large ground-floor extension that appears unbalanced in the context of the rest of the house. The proposal would involve the construction of a first-floor extension above this, but set back around 3 metres from the front gable elevation, and 1 metre back from the southern end main front elevation. It would be set in from the ground-floor side elevation by around 1 metre. The roof ridge would be set down around 2m below the ridge line of the main roof. By virtue of its scale, design and location it would appear subordinate to the existing main house.
11. Concerns have been expressed about the impact of the first-floor side extension on the chimney stack, which is noted as an important feature in establishing the character of the house, and the front gable. From my site visit, it would appear that the house is situated some distance back from the road and, by virtue of the topography of the area, is set above the level of the road. The proposed side extension would be set 3 metres behind the front gable elevation, and 1 metre behind the building line of the southern elevation at the front. On this basis, it would not compete visually with the façade of the existing house, which would remain the dominant feature.
12. The amendments to the design of the side elevation over the course of discussions with the Council's officers, have resulted in the preservation of almost all of the chimney stack, and it would remain a key feature in the roofscape. In any case, the side elevation and chimney stack would only be readily visible from directly in front of the property. When approaching from the south, they are, and would be, largely hidden from view by the body of the existing house. When approaching from the north, the bulk of the side elevation would be largely screened by outbuildings in the garden of No 59, while the chimney stack below eaves level is not, from any angle or position, readily visible.
13. On the basis of the above, I do not consider that the proposed first-floor side extension would be harmful to the character or appearance of the host property or the wider CA. By virtue of its set-back situation, it would not appear to dominate the existing front gable. Moreover, the key elements of the existing chimney stack would remain as a visual feature in the street scene. Finally, it could be argued that the well-designed first-floor extension would appear more coherent, in terms of scale, design and materials, than the existing wide single-storey extension, which appears somewhat out of context and unsympathetic in the streetscape.
14. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would preserve, and possibly enhance, the character and appearance of the CA in general and Monkham's Drive in particular. As such, it would not conflict with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the LP. Accordingly, I allow this appeal.

### **Conditions**

15. I have attached a condition relating to plans because it is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. I have attached a further condition relating to materials in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

*J D Westbrook*

INSPECTOR