



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2022

by Mark Philpott BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10TH February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/21/3288238

20 Upper Park, Loughton IG10 4EW

- 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 Debbie Curtis against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref PL/EPF/2048/21, dated 24 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with ridge raise plus front and rear dormers.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion with ridge raise plus front and rear dormers at 20 Upper Park, Loughton IG10 4EW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/EPF/2048/21, dated 24 July 2021, 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: DC/SK/01; DC/SK/02; DC/SK/03; DC/SK/04; DC/SK/06; DC/SK/15; DC/SK/17; DC/SK/20.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be those specified on the planning application form and the approved plans.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site features a 2 storey dwellinghouse with an attached garage. It is adjacent to 18 Upper Park and a junction between Upper Park and Hazelwood. The house at No 18 may have originally been of the same design as the one at No 20; however, it appears to have since been altered. Upper Park slopes upwards towards Nursery Road and features residential properties of ranging sizes, ages and designs, albeit there are small groups of similar properties also evident. The plot and ridge heights of the properties tend to change gradually along Upper Park, which provides the streetscene with a sense of rhythm. However, there are examples where ridge height changes are more pronounced, such as from Nos 29 to 31 and from Nos 30 to 32.

4. The proposal would alter the house at No 20 to a modest and proportionate extent. The development and No 18 would be separated by the garage on site and the difference between the ridge heights of Nos 18 and 20 would be comparable with ridge height differences between properties nearby. There is a significant gap between the site and 26 Upper Park on the other side of the Hazelwood highway such that there would not be a discordant relationship between these properties. The development would sit comfortably within the plot, next to No 18 and in the wider streetscene.
5. The Council puts forward that the proposal would obscure properties in Hazelwood from view from Upper Park. However, this would occur to a limited extent and the nearest properties to the rear of the site would still be largely visible from around the junction. There would be an adequate separation distance between the site and those properties. The development would not be harmful in this respect. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed dormers and these would also be compatible with the existing house and nearby properties.
6. The proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the site or the surrounding area. It accords with Policies CP2, DBE9 and DBE10 of the Epping Forest Local Plan and its subsequent Alterations which, amongst other matters, seek to protect the quality of the built environment, prevent excessive losses to amenity, and require extensions to complement and enhance the appearance of existing buildings and streetscenes. It also accords with Policies DM9 and DM10 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version, which promotes high quality design. Additionally, the proposal complies with Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework which, alongside other things, sets out that development should be sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters and Conditions

7. Having regard to the small scale of the development and the positions of the properties adjacent to the site, the proposal would not have significant adverse effects on the living conditions of neighbours. Loughton Town Council puts forward that approval of this scheme would set a precedent for similar development in the future. However, I have not been referred to any specific examples of where similar development might be harmful. In any case, each proposal must be considered on its individual merits and a generalised concern of this nature does not justify withholding planning permission.
8. The standard time and approved plans conditions are needed for certainty. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development are specified in detail on the planning application form and the drawings, and thus a condition to require that the materials used are those specified is needed. This would ensure that the resulting property has a cohesive appearance and is compatible with the character of the area.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Mark Philpott

INSPECTOR