



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2022

by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/21/3279474

168 Corbets Tey Road, Upminster, RM14 2EJ

- 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 Gill Phelps against the decision of London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0713.21, dated 8 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing dwelling with the construction of 3 dwellings consisting of 1 No. x 5-bed detached dwelling and 2 No. x 5-bed semi-detached dwellings with off street parking, private amenity space with bin and cycle storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 was adopted by the Council after the application the subject of this appeal was determined. I have determined this appeal in accordance with its policies.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - The effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Corbets Tey Road in the vicinity of the appeal site is characterised by two-storey semi-detached houses, most of which have projecting bay windows to the front elevation. Notwithstanding this, the appeal site is the first of a short run of bungalows that mark a transition to detached houses on this side of the street. Most of these detached houses are two storeys in height and some also have bay windows to the front.
5. There is therefore variety in the wider street scene, although the semi-detached houses are the predominant housing type. There is variety in appearance, materials and ridge heights, with no two detached houses or pairs of semi-detached houses being exactly like their neighbours. However, the

general appearance and proportions of the semi-detached houses are consistent. The repeating pattern of bay windows and, in most cases, hipped side roof slopes to both houses in each semi-detached pair create a strong horizontal emphasis in the street scene.

6. Within this context the three proposed houses would have ridgelines set higher than any other house in the immediate street scene. While the appeal site is wider than any neighbouring individual plot, the proposed houses would be relatively narrow compared to neighbouring properties. Their height, width, and the presence of front dormer windows and part hipped roofs to each house would together result in an uncharacteristic and incongruous vertical emphasis and bulky roof form to the three houses that would be out of keeping in the street scene.
7. There would be limited separation between the houses and to either neighbouring property. While such limited spacing does occur in the street scene, this is typically because of extensions to houses that previously were separated, especially above ground floor level. The limited separation distance would add to the overall impression of mass and the uncharacteristic vertical emphasis of the houses.
8. I recognise that design elements of the proposed houses have been drawn from the surrounding area, including the rendered house at No 162. Nevertheless, the overall appearance of the proposed development would be uncharacteristic in and unsympathetic to the street scene and surrounding area.
9. The appeal proposal would therefore be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would consequently conflict with Policies 7 and 26 of the Havering Local Plan (the HLP) and Policy D4 of the London Plan (the LP). Taken together these policies state that residential development should be of a high design quality that respects and complements the distinctive qualities, identity and character of the site and local area.

Living conditions

10. The existing bungalow and the neighbouring house No 178 are both built up to their shared boundary, with the bungalow extending beyond the rear wall of No 178. The proposed detached house would be set off this boundary, but would be significantly deeper than the bungalow, with a two-storey flank wall rising to a crown roof facing towards No 178. This wall would be significantly taller than that presently facing No 178, and the combination of the increased height and depth of this largely blank elevation would result in an overbearing and intrusive feature when seen from this neighbouring property or its rear garden.
11. Such relationships may exist elsewhere in the area, and the proposed semi-detached houses would extend further at ground floor than the detached house, but I do not consider that this would justify a relationship that would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 178. The appeal proposal would therefore conflict with Policy 7 of the HLP and guidance in the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document. These require, among other considerations, that development not result in unacceptable loss of outlook to existing residents or reduce the amenity value of neighbouring properties.

Planning Balance

12. The Council accepts that it has failed to meet its housing delivery targets. The presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is therefore engaged. As the Council's delivery over the last three years has been less than half of their target, this weighs heavily in favour of the appeal proposal.
13. The development would result in the creation of two additional dwellings. This would support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The site is in a sustainable location for residential development, and the proposal would involve the reuse of a small, previously developed site. Each house would be generously sized, and each would benefit from a large garden. There would be economic benefits both from the development itself as well as from the ongoing occupation of the houses.
14. However, the appeal proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area due to the size and design of the proposed houses, and in addition would cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
15. Taken together these adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits arising from it, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
16. There are therefore no material considerations in this instance to indicate that this appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, the appeal fails.

M Chalk

INSPECTOR