



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2021

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/W/21/3273237

Braehead East, Avenue Road, Ingatestone, CM4 9HB

- 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 Michael Howell against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01296/FUL, dated 3 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of ground floor side extension of the existing Braehead East house and the erection of a new detached 4 bedroom 2 storey house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The planning application form and Council decision notice incorrectly describe the appeal property address as 'Braehurst East'. In the banner heading above I have described the appeal property address as 'Braehead East', as referred to in the planning appeal form and noted as the correct address during my site visit.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached 2 storey house. The appeal property and its adjoining neighbour are set back from the footway behind a mature hedgerow and line of trees which largely screen their front elevations. They are accessed by front drives. Views from the street are mainly restricted to their roofs and part of their side elevations. Nonetheless, as noted by the appellant, the pair have the appearance of a converted larger single house.
5. Avenue Road varies in terms of the density of development, plot widths and depths, and house designs, as demonstrated in detail by the appellant. Both parties agree that the eastern section of Avenue Road up to its junction with the B1002 is low density comprising detached dwellings in large plots. The gaps between houses accentuates the appearance of low density, spacious development, compared to further west along the street.
6. Although the appeal site marks the transition to narrower plots and higher density development on that side of the road, in terms of its appearance it

relates better to the lower density development. This is because there is a substantial distance between the main side elevations of the appeal property and its neighbour to the east, Wotton Lodge. Although there are buildings in between these elevations, they are single storey and as a result draw attention to the gap between the main part of the houses above ground floor level. This gap, combined with the appearance of the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour as one detached property, give it a more similar appearance to properties to the east of it than the higher density development to the west of it.

7. The proposed development would involve demolishing a single storey side extension and replacing it with a detached 4 bedroomed house with the first floor accommodated in the roof space. There would be only a slight gap between the proposed dwelling and the remaining host property. This would be out of keeping with the large gaps between properties characteristic of development in the east of Avenue Road as I have described. The proposed house would have a lower roof than its neighbours and as such appear incongruous and out of keeping, particularly when approaching the site from the east. Also, it would have a narrow frontage which would be at odds with properties to the east and the combined frontage of the existing dwelling and its adjoining neighbour.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area and therefore conflict with Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework) and Policy CP1 criteria i) and iii) of the Brentwood Replacement Plan (Saved Policies) (2008) which require development to be well designed and compatible with surrounding development in terms of size, scale, and design.

Other Matters

9. I have had regard to other matters raised including the adequacy of car parking provision and vehicular access. However, as I am dismissing the appeal on the main issue for the reasons above, I have not pursued these matters further.

Planning Balance

10. The Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by the Framework. Consequently, paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged. It requires that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
11. The proposal would provide benefits in terms of contributing towards the Council's housing land supply and providing jobs during construction, which weigh in favour of the development. However, the harm caused to the character and appearance of the area is substantial and would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Thus, the proposal would not be sustainable development for which the Framework indicates a presumption in favour.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR