



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 February 2022

by S Tudhope LLB (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/21/3274579

69 Monkams Avenue, Woodford Green IG8 0EX

- 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 Moshin Khan against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0456/21, dated 7 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is proposed double storey side and rear extension and front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. An access required site visit was arranged for the 8 December 2021. As the appellant did not attend, I was unable to access the rear of the site, so this visit was aborted. The visit was rearranged and undertaken on the date set out in my Header.
3. I have noted that the Council altered the description of development from that which was originally applied for to "Front porch. Demolish garage. Two storey side extension. Single and part first floor rear extension. Hip to gable roof alteration. Removal of chimney. Alterations to fenestrations". This was subsequently adopted by the appellant in their appeal submissions. However, whilst I am satisfied that the two different descriptions describe the same scheme, in the absence of a confirmation of any agreement to change the description, I must use that which was included within the original planning application forms.
4. The Council's decision notice refers to the "Woodford Green Conservation Area". This appears to be an error as the appeal submissions of both parties give consideration to the "Woodford Broadway Conservation Area" which was extended in 2013 to include the earlier southern part of the Monkams Estate and the area of the "Woodford Green Conservation Area" considered part of the estate. I am, therefore, satisfied that neither party is prejudiced by my consideration of the appeal in relation to the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area.
5. The Council's decision notice states that the London Plan 2016 was used in the consideration of the application. However, Policy HC1, as referred to in the reasons for refusal, is a policy of the current London Plan 2021. I am therefore

satisfied that the most up to date and relevant Plan was considered, and I determine the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

6. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area.

Reasons

7. The appeal building (No 69) is a two storey semi-detached house, located on the west side of Monkams Avenue, within the Woodford Broadway Conservation Area (CA). In accordance with the statutory duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I am required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
8. This part of the CA is characterised by wide, tree lined streets of sizeable semi-detached and detached dwellings set back from the road with long rear gardens. The buildings are notable for their collective quality and tend to be individually detailed or form small clusters with richly decorative features and predominantly take a hipped roof form. The topography of the street, which rises from south to north, has resulted in some of the pairs of dwellings, including the appeal property, being stepped up from their attached neighbour. This being most evident in their divergent ridge and eaves lines. The significance of the CA appears to be largely derived from the contribution of the architectural and historic quality and character of its buildings.
9. No 69 has retained many of its original details, including its hipped roof form, chimneys, timber detailing, stained-glass ground floor hallway window and panelled front door and its red pin tile roofed bay window. As such its authenticity and historic charm, both individually and as part of a pair, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA as a whole and its significance as a heritage asset in relation to this appeal.
10. The proposed replacement of the attached single storey garage with a two storey side extension and hipped to gable roof extension, would result in an unacceptable unbalancing of the roof scape and front elevation of the pair of semi-detached properties. The additional width would be exacerbated by the wholly incongruous projection at first floor level. Whilst the design of the first floor seeks to make the most effective use of available space this element would appear as an alien and unattractive feature in the street scene.
11. As existing, the pair is not entirely symmetrical. However, the shared width of building, its hipped roof design, and the amount of space that surrounds it, provides a sense of balance and uniformity to the pair that is not diminished by the break, and step up, in the ridge and eaves height of No 69 from its attached neighbour. Rather than disassociating the two dwellings, this feature acknowledges the sloping topography whilst still providing harmony in the street scene.
12. The side extension would be limited in scale when considering its width of less than half the width of the existing dwelling. The front elevation of the existing attached garage is flush with the front elevation of the dwelling, which offers some support for continuation of the same plane at ground floor level. Spacing

between properties in the street is also varied. However, the proposed development, by virtue of the combination of the increased width, uncharacteristic first floor overhanging side projection, change in roof form, loss of chimney and reduction of spaciousness alongside the property, would significantly unbalance the semi-detached pair. The result would be a building that would not sit comfortably in the street scene. The side and roof extension would appear as a dominant and unsympathetic addition that would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and its attached neighbour. This would not be sufficiently mitigated by the use of matching materials. For these reasons, it would also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

13. Although the proposed porch would be of modest depth and would use materials to match the existing building, it would replace a traditional canopy porch and would conceal an attractive stained-glass window and door. In this manner, the proposed porch, when considered in combination with the proposed side and roof extension, would further diminish the positive contribution that the appeal building currently makes to the street scene. This would be the case even though it would be partially screened from public view by frontage vegetation.
14. My attention has been drawn to a nearby example where one of a pair of similar dwellings has altered its roof form, from hipped to gable, such that the pair has lost its symmetry. However, in that case the alteration to the roof did not involve a two storey side extension that followed the existing elevation planes. As such the frontage of that pair has maintained its consistency in width and front elevation appearance. The two storey side extension of that property is substantially stepped back at first floor and stepped down from the original ridge line in compliance with guidance set out in the Council's Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document 2019 (SPD). It is clearly subservient to the original building. Overall, the example does not represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal. I therefore afford it very limited weight in my determination of this appeal and it does not alter my opinion of the harm I have identified.
15. The proposed rear extension would project some 1.5 metres further out from the existing rear elevation than is considered acceptable in the SPD. However, the property, along with its neighbours, has a long rear garden, such that adequate amenity space and sufficient outlook from rear habitable rooms would be retained. The roof of the two storey element would have a significant step down from the main roof line and would be hipped which would minimise its overall impact. This element would be stepped away from its attached neighbour and would be similar in scale to the two storey rear extension at that property.
16. There would be a flat roof single storey element adjacent to its attached neighbour. That property already has a single storey extension beside the shared boundary. Even though the proposal would project beyond this neighbouring single storey extension, the height and flat roof nature of this part of the proposal would provide compatibility in both scale and appearance. Overall, the proposed rear extension would be subordinate to and compatible with the host property, its attached neighbour and its surroundings.

17. Although I have not found harm in respect of the rear extension element of the proposal, for the reasons given I conclude that the proposed development would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Thus, it would conflict with Policies LP26, LP30 and LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2018 and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021. When considered together these policies require development to relate well to form and character and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Conclusion

18. In the context of paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) the harm caused to the heritage asset would be less than substantial. Paragraph 199 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, as in this case, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
19. The proposal would provide additional and improved living accommodation and meet the needs of the appellant. It would make a more efficient use of land, but this would be at the detriment of the character and appearance of the host building and area. There are clearly private benefits to the proposed development. However, no public benefits have been submitted that would outweigh the harm to the heritage asset. This is a matter to which I give considerable importance and weight.
20. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole, and material considerations do not lead me to a decision otherwise. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

S Tudhope

INSPECTOR