



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2022

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/W/21/3289861

6 Elm Terrace, Grays RM20 3BP

- 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 Parvez Saifi against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01734/FUL, dated 8 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2021.
 - The proposed development is the conversion of existing bedroom and bathroom side of main building and construction of double storey side extension as self-contained one bed flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (a) the effect on the character and appearance of the area and (b) whether sufficient parking would be provided.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a modest end of terrace property with single-storey side extension. It is located at the end of a narrow unsurfaced drive accessed off London Road which is a busy main road. The drive serves the remainder of the terrace comprising 5 residential properties, as well as commercial properties including a vehicle repair garage on the corner of London Road.
4. The land immediately to the south of the appeal site comprises a raised embankment which contains overgrown vegetation and some trees. Of note is one large sycamore tree which partly overhangs the site. Beyond this embankment to the south and east of the site are further commercial properties. Residential properties lie to the west.
5. The existing property appears to comprise the original two storey cottage, occupied as one unit, and the single-storey extension which is currently accessed and occupied separately as a studio flat with small back garden.

Character and appearance

6. The existing terrace of dwellings provides a relatively dense form of development and in principle I consider that the proposed extension would, in design terms, comprise a suitable addition. It would match the appearance and height of the existing terrace with matching pitched roof form. However, the proposed ground floor window to the front elevation would appear overly large, extending right up to the boundary on one side and abutting the front

door on the other. This would not reflect the rhythm and pattern of the fenestration within the wider terrace and would present a poor façade to the street scene.

7. Furthermore, the plans do not show the position of the adjoining tree which currently has branches that overhang the existing single-storey extension and will almost certainly require removal to enable the first floor to be built. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) does not appear to refer to this nor is there any other documentation that assesses the impact on this tree. In my view in the absence of such information, the proposal could additionally harm the health of the neighbouring tree which provides a degree of softening to the street scene in an otherwise relatively poorly landscaped area.
8. I therefore find that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. It would thereby conflict with Policies PMD2, CSTP22 and CSTP23 of the Thurrock Core Strategy (2015) (CS) which seek high quality development that responds to the sensitivity of the site and its local context and protects the character of the area whilst optimising the potential of the site to accommodate development. I also find conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks well designed places that function well and are sympathetic to local character.

Parking / highway safety

9. A single parking space is indicated to be provided at the end of the unmade road to the front of the appeal site. However, it appears to be located outside the red edged application site and would be across the southern end of the unmade road in a position that would be difficult, if not impossible, to manoeuvre into and out of.
10. The site is located in a reasonably accessible location with facilities and public transport nearby. However, the Council has confirmed that nevertheless, a minimum of one space should be provided to meet adopted standards. I note that the proposal would replace an existing one bed studio flat but according to the Council that is an unauthorised use. In the absence of any contrary information or reasoning to justify the absence of parking provision, I find that the proposal would be likely to result in increased parking stress with the potential to have a harmful effect on highway safety.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would fail to comply with CS policies PMD2, PMD8 and PMD9 which seek to facilitate accessible development, that reduces risks of inappropriate on-street parking and minimises new or increased use of accesses that prejudice road safety.

Conclusions

12. The proposal would provide an enhanced unit of accommodation that would make a small but valuable contribution to local supply. However, the benefits arising are insufficient to outweigh the conflict with the development plan.
13. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

P Jarvis

INSPECTOR