



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 September 2022

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/22/3295164

32 Holgate Road, Dagenham, RM10 8LX

- 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 Valdas Murnikovas against the decision of the Council to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 21/02158, dated 12 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as a single storey rear and side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. The appellant has not submitted any grounds of appeal. Accordingly, I confirm that, as required by planning law, this appeal has been determined in accordance with the development plan, other than where material considerations dictate otherwise.
3. In their decision letter the council refers to policies SP2, DMD1 and DMD6 of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham's Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19 Submission Version, October 2020). However, these policies have been superseded by policies SP2, DMD1 and DMD6 of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham's Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19 Submission Version, Autumn 2021) (Draft LP). In relation to the determination of this appeal the content of the updated draft policies has not materially changed and are consistent with the adopted development plan policies.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, the street scene and the Becontree Estate.

Reasons

5. The Becontree Estate is a residential area, which was developed between 1921 and 1934 as part of the Homes for Heros initiative following the First World War. The estate is primarily characterised by uniformly sited and designed terraced and semi-detached two storey houses with uncluttered front elevations under fully hipped roofs, with chimneys.

6. The buildings are separated from each other by generous sized gaps and the individual dwellings have varied sized rear gardens. Some of these gaps have been partially filled with a combination of single and two storey extensions, which are generally set back from the front building lines of the host dwellings.
7. The dwellings sit back from the highway behind modest sized front gardens. Some of the front gardens are soft landscaped and enclosed by low hedges, fences and walls. Others now have vehicle crossovers and are hard surfaced. The corner dwellings occupy particularly wide plots which respect the front building lines of the houses in the adjoining roads. This adds to the sense of uniformity and to the spacious suburban character and appearance of the estate.
8. The appeal dwelling occupies a wide plot in a prominent corner position adjacent to the junction of Holgate Road and Sterry Road. The appeal dwelling's side elevation aligns with the front building lines of the dwellings on the west side of Sterry Road and the width of its side garden mirrors that of the dwelling directly opposite at 35 Holgate Road.
9. The appeal dwelling comprises one of pair of modest sized and symmetrically designed semi-detached houses. They both have flat and uncluttered elevations under a fully hipped roof. The exterior walls of the appeal dwelling are rendered and painted white, above a black painted plinth. The adjoining dwelling is clad with dark painted timber boarding above a black painted plinth. It has a part single/part two storey side/rear extension. The first floor element of the side extension is set back from the front elevation of the original dwelling and its walls are rendered and painted white.
10. Collectively and amongst other things paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), policies D1, D4 & D8 of the London Plan, policies CP2 & CP3 of the Barking & Dagenham Local Development Framework (LDF) Core strategy 2010 (CS) and policy BP11 of the LDF Borough Wide Development Plan Document (DPD), require new development to be designed to a high quality and to reinforce local distinctiveness within the public realm. New development should respect and strengthen local character and provide a strong sense of place. It should be suitably designed within the context of its setting and relate appropriately to the surrounding area. DPD policy BP2 seeks to preserve, reinstate and enhance the distinctive and historic features of the Becontree Estate.
11. The Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (SPD), advises that extensions should be sympathetic and should not unbalance the original dwelling. Extensions should respect the existing roof, fenestration and external materials and side extensions should reflect the existing house type and the type of plot. The character of semi-detached houses is partly derived from the symmetry of the pair of dwellings. As such, extensions should appear subordinate to the host dwelling.
12. In relation to the consideration of the appeal proposal, policies SP2, DMD1 and DMD6 of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham's Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19 Submission Version, Autumn 2021) (Draft LP), are consistent with the above policies and advice. Draft LP Policy DMD6 states that residential extensions should be sympathetic and subordinate to the host dwelling in relation to scale, form, materials and detailing.

13. The vast majority of gardens to the sides of corner plots have been retained. Those that have been developed with extensions and outbuildings or enclosed by high fencing have had an enclosing impact on the street scene and have blended into the street scene with varying degrees of success. This has been dependant on the size of any retained gaps and the size, proportions, form and design of the outbuildings and extensions concerned. Rather than set a precedent they serve to reinforce the need to assess each proposal on its planning merits and in light of the prevailing planning policies.
14. The front section of the land to the side of the appeal site has been hard surfaced and is used for parking. The remainder has been enclosed by tall fencing. This has had an urbanising and enclosing impact on the street scene, although the sense of space is retained above the fencing.
15. The flank wall of the proposed extension would be two metres from the boundary with the highway and the wide flank wall and roofs of the proposed extension would be clearly visible above the side boundary fence. Where it adjoins the existing dwelling the proposed extension would have a shallow mono-pitched pitched roof and to the rear of the host dwelling would have an almost flat roof. There would be no openings in the flank elevation and on the front elevation there would be a single window which would have different proportions of those of the existing windows on the front elevation.
16. Due to its combined width, depth and roof design the relationship between the existing rear conservatory and the proposed rear extension would be visually awkward, poorly proportioned and designed.
17. As a result of these factors the proposed extension would appear squat, utilitarian and uncharacteristically deep and wide. It would fail to respect the existing house type and would be neither sympathetic nor subordinate in relation to the scale, form, materials and detailing of the host dwelling. The proposed extension would materially detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the pair of semi-detached dwellings. It would also have an enclosing impact on the area around the street junction and would fail to respect local character or relate appropriately to the surrounding area.
18. Overall, the harm that would be caused by the proposal would outweigh the benefits for the appellant and their family that would result from the additional living accommodation. This harm could not be satisfactorily overcome by the imposition of conditions.
19. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the street scene and the Becontree Estate. It would therefore conflict with London Plan Policies D1, D4 & D8, CS Policies CP2 & CP3, DPD Policies BP2 BP11, the SPD, Draft LP Policies SP2, DMD1 & DMD6 and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR

