



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2022

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/22/3292200

83 Forest Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 1EF

- 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 and Mrs C Mobbs against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref PL/EPF/2570/21, dated 24 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing rear extension and conservatory; single storey rear extension with roof lantern; roof extension with rear dormer window to facilitate a loft room; two storey front extension; conversion of undersized existing garage into habitable accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing rear extension and conservatory; single storey rear extension with roof lantern; roof extension with rear dormer window to facilitate a loft room; two storey front extension; conversion of undersized existing garage into habitable accommodation at 83 Forest Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 1EF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/EPF/2570/21, dated 24 September 2021, subject to the following conditions:-
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 20018-P-000; 20018-P-001 RevA; 20018-P-002 RevB; 20018-P-003; 20018-P-004; 20018-P-005.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary matter

2. The Council's decision refers to policies DM9 and DM10 in the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version 2017 (LPSV) which concern design quality. I have noted that, although not yet adopted by the Council as part of its development plan, the LPSV has been through the examination process and has reached a very advanced stage. I am not aware of any unresolved objections to these policies so far as they relate to this appeal. Therefore, I have attached significant weight to these emerging policies.

Reasons

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area. The development plan includes policies CP2, CP7 and DBE10 in the Epping Forest District Local Plan & Alterations (1998 & 2006) (LP) which together seek to ensure, amongst other things, that development proposals safeguard and improve the quality of the environment and are of a high quality that respects their settings.
4. Forest Road is a residential street of mainly traditional, modestly sized semi-detached and terraced dwellings of varying styles. The appeal dwelling is a semi-detached cottage style dwelling of two storeys which has previously been extended to the side, front and rear.
5. The Council has not objected to the demolition of the existing rear extension and conservatory, the single storey rear extension, two storey front extension or conversion of the garage and from what I have seen those parts of the proposal would be acceptable.
6. In regard to the proposed roof extension, whilst this would generally be undesirable on a semi-detached dwelling, in this case the symmetry of the appeal dwelling and its adjoining neighbour has already been much altered by extensions, window alterations and external materials. Furthermore, in this street the gaps between dwellings are small and the dwellings are read as a row rather than as individual buildings. There is a great variety in ridge heights along the street including several examples of adjoining dwellings such as at no 89 that has recently been granted permission to include the raising of the ridge. In this street, the variety does not appear incongruous given the variety of dwelling styles and indeed makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. In this context then, I find that the roof extension would be acceptable.
7. The proposed rear dormer would be large and would occupy most of the roof slope. Although it would extend slightly above part of the ridge, it would be finished in materials to match the roof and would not be unduly noticeable in the street scene. When looking at the rear elevation from the garden of the appeal site during my visit, I noted that the dormer would be seen in the context of the significantly taller, deeper and bulkier neighbouring dwelling at no 81, a large projecting two storey extension at the adjoining cottage and the large full width approved dormer at no 89. I find that whilst a dormer of this size and scale would be generally unacceptable, in this context it would not be overly dominant and would be comfortably absorbed within the scale of the surrounding buildings.
8. I conclude then that the proposed development would be acceptable and would not harm the character or appearance of the dwelling or the area. It would accord with the LP and LPSV policies referred to earlier.

Other matters

9. I have noted other parties' concerns regarding the loss of a parking space but from what I have seen it will still be possible to park a small vehicle on the drive of the property and, in any case, given the small scale of this proposal I am satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on on-street parking in the area.

10. The Council raised no objection in terms of neighbouring occupiers' living conditions and on the basis of what I have seen I would agree that the proposal is acceptable in this regard.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition is necessary requiring that the proposal is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in order to provide certainty. A condition requiring matching external materials is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would accord with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh this. The appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector