The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2022

by S. Hartley BA (Hons) Dist.TP (Manc) DMS MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/22/3306624
23 Connaught Avenue, Loughton, Essex IG10 4DS

- 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 Dean against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
- The application Ref: EPF/0498/22, dated 28 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2022.
- The development proposed is a first-floor side extension and the construction of a rear dormer to create a larger master suite on the second floor.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a first-floor side extension and the construction of a rear dormer to create a larger master suite on the second floor at No 23 Connaught Avenue, Loughton, Essex IG10 4DS in accordance with the terms of application Ref EPF/0498/22, dated 28 February 2022, and subject to the following conditions: -

    i. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.

    ii. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: existing plans, elevations and site plan drawing No.01 (January 2022) and proposed plans, elevations and site plan drawing No.02, revision A (January 2022).

Procedural Matter

2. The local planning authority (LPA) has referred in its decision notice to the Epping Forest Local Plan submission version (2017) (ELP) which has yet to adopted by the Council. I therefore afford it limited weight in the decision making process.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The area in the vicinity of the appeal property is comprised mainly of substantial, mainly detached dwellings with differing designs, set back from the road and with plentiful front and rear amenity spaces.

5. The appeal property is a substantial two storey, externally rendered dwelling with two separate, two storey, front gables with the main entrance between, in a modern classical style. It has a single storey side addition, built as part of the original house.

6. The proposal is to add a first-floor extension on top of the single storey part and also to include a box dormer to the rear of the property.

7. While the LPA considers that the proposed development would adversely affect the character and appearance of the building, so far as the side extension is concerned, this would be set back somewhat from the existing main front of the dwelling, would be lower than the existing ridge of the house, would include a hipped roof and would not have a greater footprint than the existing ground floor below it. For these reasons, the proposed side extension would not give the appearance of a top-heavy dwelling and would be an appropriate addition in design terms.

8. The proposed box dormer, while extending along the length of the original two storey rear elevation, would be set down from the ridge of the dwelling and would be set in from the eaves. While it would change the appearance of the rear elevation, given its position and size, it would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the dwelling and would not create an unacceptable top-heavy appearance. The properties in the immediate area are individually designed, and for this reason the proposed additions would also not appear incongruous in the street scene.

9. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would accord with policy DB10 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 1998 which requires that residential extensions should complement, and where appropriate enhance, the existing buildings and the street scene. It would also conform with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which emphasises the need for visually attractive design.

Other Matters

10. Loughton Town Council, as well as objecting to the proposed development in terms of character and appearance, also objects on the basis that the proposed development would result in an increased sense of enclosure and loss of light to the occupiers of the adjacent No 21 Connaught Avenue.

11. However, after taking into account the position of windows, the separation distance between the two houses and their orientation in relation to the arc of the sun, the LPA considers that the proposed development would not have a significantly adverse effect in terms of outlook or loss of light. I note that the occupiers of No 21 Connaught Avenue have not objected to the proposal.

Based on my consideration of the plans and on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree with the conclusions of the LPA in respect of these matters.

Planning conditions

12. I have imposed the standard time condition and a condition to ensure the development is in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

S. Hartley

INSPECTOR