
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2023

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/23/3314591
4 Hardie Road, Dagenham, RM10 7BS

- 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 Modestas Kondzeliauskas against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref. 22/01551/HSE, dated 10 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing rear extension. Construction of two storey side extension, single storey front and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property, the semi-detached pair of which it forms part and the street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located in a prominent position close to a road junction. It is part of a small group of semi-detached dwellings set behind a deep green verge that contributes to the openness of this entrance into the road. There is a generous gap between the appeal property and 2 Hardie Road to the south, created by their side gardens. The area is characterised by semi-detached and terraced houses of similar original design and detailing, and although many have been extended this has not undermined the cohesive character and appearance of the estate.
4. Most properties in Hardie Road and surrounding streets have reasonably modest front garden depths, and as such it is the gaps between buildings which provide the sense of space. The gap between 2 and 4 Hardie Road is not typical in the street scene, being much wider than most, and as such it is an important and positive feature of this particular grouping at the road entrance.
5. There is an extant planning permission for a two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension (application ref. 22/00304/HSE). The proposed development is similar in design, but the Council advises that the width would increase from 4.33m to 5.9m. Despite the recessed siting of the first-floor

behind the main front wall, the perception would be that the building width would double, with a much more extensive roof ridge line than the existing dwelling; its lower height would not mask its width. The dominance of the extension would be increased by the width of the front porch, spanning the new extension and part of the original house. Although the approved scheme would have reduced the spacing to 2 Hardie Road, this proposal would close the gap further, to the detriment of the openness which is so important to this part of the street scene.

6. The depth of the proposed rear extension would be acceptable in isolation, and much would replace an existing extension. It would have limited visual impact outside of the site, but as it forms part of the large side extension it adds to the overall scale of new development at the property. The combination of the side, rear and front extensions would be excessive and would overwhelm the original dwelling. Although I acknowledge that the orientation of the proposed extension and its position set back into the site, this scale would be particularly noticeable given the modest footprint of the original building and the simplicity of its design.
7. As the attached property is not extended, the symmetry of the semi-detached pair would be lost. However, I am mindful that the approved extension would also compromise this symmetry, and there are other semi-detached and end-terrace houses in the vicinity with side extensions which have affected the balance of their building group. Nevertheless, the degree to which symmetry would be harmed is relevant, and this overly large and disproportionate addition would disrupt the balanced appearance of the pair to an unacceptable degree. The use of matching materials would not mitigate this impact.
8. The guidance for side extensions on semi-detached houses in the Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (SPD) notes that they can significantly alter symmetry, and that making an extension appear subordinate should be achieved by setting it back by at least 1m at first floor level from the main front wall of the house. Whilst I note the appellant's view that the proposal accords with this guidance, this is only one aspect of creating a compatible design. In this case, any visual benefit of the proposed first-floor recess would be offset by the significant increase in the overall width, bulk and footprint of the dwelling. Moreover, although the proposed porch would not extend by more than 1m from the original front wall, its width and depth in front of the extension would add to its mass and visual impact.
9. The appellant has drawn attention to other developments granted in the vicinity, but few details have been provided. Nevertheless, viewing extensions in the surrounding streets, none appeared to be as dominant on the host dwelling and the street scene as proposed in this case, or were not in positions where openness would be so affected. As such, they do not support a development of the scale proposed.
10. I therefore conclude that as a result of its width, bulk, mass, scale, siting and design, the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property, the semi-detached pair of which it forms part and the street scene. It would conflict with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, and with Policy D4 of The London Plan 2021, which seeks to deliver high quality design; and with Core Strategy 2010 (CS) Policy CP3, which amongst other criteria expects high quality development which respects

and strengthens local character and provides a sense of place. It would also be contrary to Policies BP8 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document 2011 (DPD), which together require all developments to protect or enhance the character and amenity of the area.

11. CS Policy CP2 and DPD Policy BP2 appear to have been included in the reasons for refusal in error, as they are not mentioned in the Council's delegated report. I have also placed limited weight on the draft Local Plan policies listed due to the stage in the examination process and the potential for modification.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR