
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 May 2023

by C McDonagh BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/22/3309694

47 Lexden Drive, Chadwell Heath, Redbridge, Romford RM6 4TJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant approval required under Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Mr Qaiser Ahmed against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2627/22, dated 5 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'upwards extension of one storey'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (the GPDO), permits, subject to limitations and conditions, development consisting of the enlargement of a dwellinghouse by up to two additional storeys, where the existing dwellinghouse consists of two or more storeys, together with any reasonably necessary engineering operations.
3. The GPDO sets out in paragraph AA.3(12)(b) that the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) must be considered in this type of prior approval case insofar as it is relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application.
4. The relevant provisions of the GPDO do not require regard to be had to the development plan. Accordingly, I have only considered the policies and guidance cited in the decision notice insofar as they are a material consideration relevant to matters relating to the main issues. They are not, in themselves, determinative.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the external appearance of the dwellinghouse and character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling with a paved area to the front. The area is residential in character and while the houses of Lexden Drive vary in some aspects of their appearance, such as the two end-

terrace dwellings of three storey height on the opposite side of the street, there is a general consistency in terms of facing materials, height and set back from the road.

7. The additional storey would add significant height to the host building which would result in an elongated appearance and much taller than the adjoining semi, unbalancing the handed pair. As a result, it would spoil the pleasant symmetry which adds to the character and appearance of the area, in particular this side of the street, and the resultant house would be a dominant, uncharacteristic and obtrusive feature in that context.
8. I take on board the point that No's 44 and 46 Lexden Drive have been extended upwards with an additional storey. I observed these on the site visit, along with the three-storey apartment block at the junction with Langham Drive. However, 44 and 46 are end-terrace dwellings rather than semi-detached and the other dwellings in their respective terraces have retained their two-storey height, which remains the predominant scale of housing in the street scene. The apartment block has a different design and character to the housing in Lexden Drive and is located some distance from the appeal site with little intervisibility between the two elements. As such, the presence of these three-storey buildings does not convince me that the proposal is acceptable.
9. I am advised that the owner of No.49 is considering submitting a similar proposal to the appeal before me, which it is claimed would balance the pair. However, there is no certainty that this would come forth and I can only assess the proposal on its own merits as a result. The 5m set back from the road does not lessen the harm I have identified, and the fact that the area is not designated for its historic interest does not lessen the harm caused to the street scene given the importance the Framework places on design in the context of sustainable development.
10. To conclude on this main issue, the proposal would harm the external appearance of the dwellinghouse and character and appearance of the area. In this regard, the proposal would conflict with the Framework which requires at paragraph 130 that development is sympathetic to local character.
11. Although not determinative, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies LP26 and LP30 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (adopted March 2019) and Policy D4 of the London Plan (adopted March 2021) which seek to ensure household extensions complement the character of the building and maintains or improves the appearance of the locality or street scene.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I consider the proposal would have an unacceptable harmful effect on the external appearance of the dwellinghouse and the character and appearance of the area. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C McDonagh

INSPECTOR