



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 April 2023

by J Wellstead BA(Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/D/23/3315736

29 Primrose Hill, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4LT

- 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 Mrs Karen Jewers against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01367/HHA, dated 27 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is a rear first floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development above has been taken from the decision notice and appeal form and differs slightly from the description on the application form. However, both descriptions adequately describe the proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a detached bungalow on a small, triangular shaped plot, tightly abutted by Primrose Hill Road, a two-storey dwelling and a car park area for nearby flats.
5. The appeal scheme would add a part first-floor extension to the rear of the property to provide additional internal living space.
6. While the appeal scheme would be set back from the road, the site's position on the slope of Primrose Hill means it would have some prominence. The garage and well-established hedging at the southwest of the appeal site currently limits views of the existing property on entering Primrose Hill from Kings Road, but the additional storey of the appeal scheme means it would be clearly seen above the garage and hedging from this direction.
7. Some elements of the scheme would be partially screened from other angles by neighbouring properties and vegetation. However, the shape, size and position of the site, the slope of the road and the height of the appeal scheme, mean it would be visible and prominent to varying degrees from different viewpoints

including from Primrose Court and therefore it would impact on the street scene.

8. The appeal site is out of character in comparison to the surrounding properties with two or more stories and the council agree that a dwelling with a second storey is acceptable in principle. However, the proposed design of the scheme would result in an unbalanced and awkward-looking part one-storey, part two-storey dwelling with a mix of convoluted roof forms squeezed into a small, constrained plot. This would result in a cramped and odd-looking form of development that would be conspicuous and incongruous within the street scene. The surrounding built form would provide a backdrop to these views but this does not lessen the need for appropriate design. The appellant acknowledges that the design is unusual.
9. The extensions, alterations and roof forms at Nos. 23 and 25 Primrose Hill and the existence of a range of roof forms at Nos. 4, 16, 18, 20, 22, 22a, 24 and 26 Primrose Hill do not alter my conclusion that the appeal scheme would read as an unacceptable feature within the street scene, due to the combination of design issues described above. In addition, while the examples provided share some common elements with the appeal scheme, they do not share the same position, prominence and constraints as the appeal site, so are not directly comparable.
10. The appellant has highlighted that a blank elevation of 58A Kings Road also faces on to the car park. However, this is set back from the car park, is partially screened by vegetation and is located away from the windows of habitable rooms in the flats. In contrast, the appeal scheme would be set close to the boundary, would not be screened to the same degree and is within the line of sight of habitable windows. I accept that the block of flats contains sections of blank brickwork but this is in the context of a building of a different scale, design and position than the appeal scheme.
11. The appellant states that blank elevations are not uncommon, and that the context of the site means this elevation should be considered as similar to a side elevation on a boundary. Although the appeal scheme is located close to the boundary, it faces onto a car park and habitable windows. Nevertheless, even if I were to agree that the blank elevation was acceptable, the above design issues persuade me that the proposal fails to avoid harm overall.
12. In coming to this view, I have taken into account the appeal scheme's retention of the hipped roof form, the matching of the pitch to the existing roof and the minimal additional footprint of the appeal scheme.
13. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the local area. It would therefore conflict with Policy BE14 of the Brentwood Local Plan 2016-2033 (2022) and the National Design Guide 2021. Together, these documents seek to ensure - amongst other matters - that new development responds positively and sympathetically to the context. In addition, the proposal would not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (The 'Framework') which states that developments should be sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

14. There are no objections from the council with regards to the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in terms of outlook and privacy, subject to appropriate conditions restricting outlook and providing an additional rooflight being implemented. However, whether such a condition is required would not affect my conclusion on the main issue.
15. The appellant has highlighted that the Council considers there is adequate parking provision retained within the site, and it would provide acceptable living conditions for current and future occupiers and the internal extension works would function appropriately. However, these matters do not outweigh the harms identified above.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given, I conclude that the development conflicts with the development plan, read as a whole. No material considerations have been demonstrated that would carry sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

J Wellstead

INSPECTOR