



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 November 2022

by P Storey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/22/3298973

1 Lynwood Drive, Romford RM5 2RB

- 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 Khalid Saleem against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
- The application Ref P2078.21, dated 28 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2022.
- The development proposed was described as: "*Retrospective planning application to retain split of house into 2 units and to retain the two storey side extension and the loft dormer.*"

The side extension was built extending 30cm from previously approved plans (ref: P0589.19) this difference was due to having technical difficulties at site as of solid thick layer of reinforcement concrete floor/foundation were discovered after demolition which would have required use of heavy machinery. Photos attached please refer. Also there was discrepancy between the site boundary and the previously approved plans (P0589.19).

Construction start and end dates

Demolition of building 01/04/2021 end 20/04/2021

Construction of foundation 26/04/2021 end 30/04/2021

Side extension walls 03/05/2021 end 20/06/2021

Loft dormer construction 15/05/2021 end 24/07/2021"

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. This appeal relates to a development that has been substantially completed. At my site visit I noted some discrepancies between the submitted plans and the development as built, principally relating to the design of the roof. The development as built has the appearance of a 'hip-to-gable' extension being added to the pre-existing 2-storey part of the building. This matches the height of the pre-existing ridge line at the highest point. In contrast, the submitted plans show the extension to the main ridge of the building would feature a hipped element to the side. The overall result is that the structure as built has a longer ridge line than is shown on the submitted plans.
3. The plans also illustrate the dormer window to have a flat roof set below the lowered ridge line of the side extension. As built, it has a slightly sloping roof that abuts the lower ridge line of the side extension. There are also discrepancies with the position and design of some windows and openings, and the inclusion of an additional skylight to the front roof slope.

4. Taken as a whole, the development as built has a greater overall massing than is shown on the plans. However, notwithstanding that the appellant's description on the application form sets out the construction start and end dates, it is not clear whether the development I observed was in its finished state. Accordingly, I have determined the appeal based on the details shown on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is an extended semi-detached house on a prominent corner of Lynwood Drive and Clockhouse Lane. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and contains a mixture of other uses. Lynwood Drive is a traditional street characterised mainly by semi-detached dwellings.
7. Although the dormer window is on the rear elevation, the site's corner location means it is highly visible when approaching from the south along Clockhouse Lane. Due to its sloping roof and position abutting the ridge line of the side extension, it appears from many approaching vantage points to extend along the full ridge line of the building. It is only clear in longer range views that there is a slight offset from the main ridge of the building. I acknowledge that a certificate of lawfulness has previously been granted for a rear dormer window, but the dormer window as built is notably larger. Even while acknowledging that the dormer window shown on the submitted plans would be slightly smaller than is currently built, its overall effect would be a development of excessive scale and bulk that would appear disproportionate, unduly dominant and uncharacteristic in the context of the surroundings.
8. The effects of the side extension would be most keenly appreciated from the front. Even when acknowledging that the submitted plans show a shorter ridge line than is currently built, the proposed development would significantly lengthen the ridge line. When read alongside the adjoining semi-detached dwelling, the result is an unbalanced and disproportionate structure that would not reflect the character of its adjoining pair. Furthermore, the slightly lower hipped roof extension to the side would add to the overall bulk and exacerbate its effect as a disproportionate, unbalanced and incongruous feature in the streetscene. When read as a whole, the proposed development would not reflect the character or appearance of the surrounding area.
9. The roof extensions and dormer window are to be finished in dark grey slate, which contrasts with the red tiled roofs predominantly found in the surrounding area. However, during the course of my site visit I observed several examples of varying roofing materials being used in the surrounding area. The roof at present appears starkly different to its immediate neighbours, due in part to its recent installation and limited weathering. This is a factor in the differing shades and appearance of roofs throughout the area, to the extent that even some recently constructed red tiled roofs stand out as appearing different. In this respect, the roofing materials are likely to weather and appear as a more inclusive part of the character over time. Coupled with the wide-ranging use of varying shades of brick and render for walls in the surrounding area, I do not find specific harm to arise through the choice of materials.

10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area which would conflict with Policy 26 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (Adopted November 2021), which seeks to promote high quality design which, among other objectives, respects, reinforces and complements the local streetscene, and responds to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge that the development would provide convenient neighbouring living accommodation for relatives of the appellant, which would provide certain benefits to occupiers of both properties. I also note the development makes efficient use of the appeal site in an accessible location, and that the use of sustainable materials and construction techniques would seek to deliver a high-quality development with a reduced carbon footprint, which would support the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). However, the Framework is also clear that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that development that is not well designed should be refused. Accordingly, these benefits carry limited weight.
12. I acknowledge the appellant's reference to the Havering Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted 2011). However, I do not find the various elements of the development to accord with the guidance, and therefore this does not weigh in favour of the appeal.
13. I have reviewed the examples of other developments in Havering provided by the appellant, including 3 developments on St Leonards Way. However, the contexts of all cited examples are very different to the appeal proposal, and as such I have given them very limited weight in my decision.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development would fail to accord with the policies of the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, that outweigh this conflict. For the above reasons, and taking account of all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P Storey

INSPECTOR