



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2023

by H Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/22/3311728

Flat B, 481 Grove Green Road, Leytonstone, Waltham Forest E11 4AA

- 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 M Sharif against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application Ref 222315, dated 6 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is a rear roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered from that on the planning application form. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the description given on the original application, albeit I have omitted superfluous elements that are not acts of development.
3. Within the appellant's submissions it is indicated that a planning application was submitted to the Council and was not determined. However, the appeal form confirms the grounds of the appeal are that the Council refused planning permission. The appeal form confirms the application reference (222315) the subject of the appeal, whilst the decision notice, setting out the Council's reason for refusal, has been supplied. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. 481 Grove Green Road is an extended property and comprises of several floors of accommodation. In part, the property is traditionally designed and incorporates a pitched roof with red roof tiles and parapet features. The property is partly constructed of brick and exhibits some ornate and distinctive design detailing including to its front elevation window surrounds. At the rear of the property there are flat roofed outriggers which step down in height. Grey paint and render finishes cover much of the rear of the property.

6. Beside No 481, there is a hard surfaced area which, at the time of my visit, had parked cars upon it. Next to this there is a landscaped area with trees and, beyond, a foot and cycle path and a playground. The foot and cycle path leads in one direction to a bridge over a multi-laned road. On the opposite side of the property to the parking area, No 481 adjoins a recently built development containing flats which has a contemporary appearance and is largely constructed of light coloured brickwork. The local area is predominantly residential in character with many properties being traditionally designed terraces.
7. With no adjoining property to one side and given the roads, pavements, the foot and cycle path and, the landscaped space near to it, there is a relatively open aspect to the host property and, therefore, it is visible from a number of public vantage points.
8. The proposed rear roof extension would run the width of the existing rear roof slope between the parapet features. Its height would be comparable with the existing roof ridge but would adopt a flat roofed design. Although the proposed extension has been revised from an earlier iteration which the Council also refused and, now proposes greater set-backs from existing outrigger walls, it would also project considerably farther to the rear than the existing rear roof slope. Therefore, and despite providing only a single floor of further accommodation, the proposed rear roof extension would form a large box-like addition to the property which would unduly dominate the roofscape.
9. In doing so, and although the appellant submits that the proposal would maintain the eaves of the existing property, the proposed extension would remove and conceal much of the existing rear roof slope. This would include the rooftiles and, due to the extension's scale and projection, the parapets in some views.
10. For these reasons, the proposed rear roof extension would form a harmfully dominant addition to the property which would reduce the legibility of a traditional part of the property.
11. The elevations of the proposed extension would largely be finished with timber cladding. This material would differ from the brickwork, grey render and the red rooftiles which are the prevailing materials at the rear of the host property and the contemporary flats adjacent. Therefore, in the proposal, the range of material finishes at the rear of these properties would increase. Rather than being complementary, the introduction of this timber to the extent proposed would serve to create a more discordant arrangement of materials which would be harmful. In coming to this view, I acknowledge that some use of red tiles is proposed which would be reflective of the existing roof. However, their use would not mitigate the harm caused by the scale and design of the proposed extension nor the widespread use of timber.
12. Being a rear roof extension, the proposed development would not be visible from some views at the front of the property nor alter the front elevation. However, for the reasons I have set out above, the property, including its rear elevation, is clearly visible from other locations. Therefore, and even though it would be a rear roof extension, the unsympathetic scale, design and material finish of the proposal would be readily appreciated from a number of viewpoints. This would include elsewhere on Grove Green Road, in and around the nearby playground and from the nearby foot and cycle path.

13. I accept that the redevelopment that has taken place at the adjoining property has a different appearance to the host property and, containing several flats, it is a larger building than the proposed extension. However, and unlike the property adjoining, the proposed development is an extension to an existing property rather than a redevelopment in more entirety. The circumstances of the two sites therefore differ and, as a result, I find that the development that has taken place next door does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
14. I also acknowledge that the appeal site is not within a conservation area and there may not be listed buildings within the immediate vicinity, nevertheless, for the above reasons the proposed development would be harmful.
15. For the above reasons the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Therefore, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy CS15 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Core Strategy, March 2012 and Policies DM4 and DM29 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Development Management Policies document, October 2013. In summary, and amongst other matters, these policies seek to ensure that development incorporates the highest quality of design and materials and, responds positively to local context and character including in terms of scale and massing. The proposed development would also conflict with guidance contained within the Waltham Forest Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document, February 2010. This document states that extensions should maintain harmony with the original building and complement its size, shape and character.

Other Matters

16. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of roof extensions within the area which they consider set a precedent for the development proposed. As the appellant has put to me, it could be that in some of the cited cases the extensions were undertaken utilising permitted development rights whilst in relation to some extensions, I have received details of lawful development certificates that were granted. Whilst I acknowledge that there are roof extensions in the local area, some of which are of a significant scale, there are also many other traditional properties in the area which do not have such extensions and the traditional roof slopes of which can still be appreciated. Therefore, I find that these existing roof extensions are not so abundant as to form a predominant characteristic of the area. Moreover, in the main issue I have identified that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host property and area. Therefore, that there are other roof extensions nearby does not outweigh this harm nor justify the development proposed.
17. The appellant also submits that if the appeal property were a single dwelling as opposed to flatted accommodation, a roof extension of the form the subject of the appeal would have been constructed under permitted development rights. However, I have no substantive evidence before me to suggest that an extension comparable with that proposed under this appeal could be constructed under permitted development rights at the host property. As such, it is a matter of negligible weight.
18. In the proposal, the accommodation within the property would be increased and this may enhance its usability and flexibility as well as provide natural light

and ventilation. However, the benefit that may be derived from this would be insufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified in the main issue.

19. The appeal site may not be within a location with a high risk of flooding whilst I have no reason to conclude that the proposed development could not be adequately drained. Vehicular access arrangements and pedestrian routes may not be directly affected by the development. However, the lack of harm in relation to these matters is a neutral factor in my determination and weighs neither in favour nor against the proposal.
20. The appellant has submitted that the Council has not worked in an engaged and proactive manner and drawn some issue with the Council's handling of the planning application. However, this has little to do with the merits of the case.

Conclusion

21. For the above reasons, having taken account of the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

H Jones

INSPECTOR