



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2023

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/23/3323983
84 Princes Road, Romford RM1 2SP

- 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 Keith Davison against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0490.23, dated 26 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2023.
 - The proposed development is demolition of existing pitched roof outbuilding; single-storey ground floor extension to the rear of the existing dwelling, including internal reorganisation of existing spaces to provide enhanced living / kitchen / dining accommodation; conversion of existing attic space, including introduction of dormer to accommodate 1 no. additional bedroom complete with en-suite; and construction of new single storey outbuilding to rear garden.
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Procedural Matter

1. The Council has described the development as "single storey side / rear extension, loft conversion with dormers to side and rear, also erection of outbuilding to rear following demolition of existing garage / outbuilding". This more accurately describes the whole development.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey side / rear extension, loft conversion with dormers to side and rear, also erection of outbuilding to rear following demolition of existing garage / outbuilding at 84 Princes Road, Romford RM1 2SP in accordance with the terms of application ref: P0490.23 dated 26 March 2023 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) This permission shall relate to the following approved plans: MiL-PL-001 (Revision 01) – site location and layout plan; MiL-PL-002 (Revision 01) – existing plans; MiL-PL-003 – existing elevations and sections; MiL-PL-004 – proposed plans; MiL-PL-005 (Revision 01) – proposed elevations.
 - 3) No openings shall be inserted in the flank (south side) elevation of the dormer on the southern roofslope (facing No. 86 Princes Road).
 - 4) The roof area of the side/rear extension hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area.

Main Issue

3. The Council does not appear to object to the proposed rear outbuilding. Therefore, the main issue is the impact of the proposed extensions and roof alterations / dormers on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a two storey detached dwelling, probably of early 20th century origin, with part brick part pebble dashed elevations, with some tile hanging to the front, and hipped tiled roof. It has a two storey, rear element of lesser width than the main dwelling with attached single storey 'lean to' style extension. It is set close to the road frontage with similar dwellings either side which provide a continuous built-up frontage to the street. There is a narrow drive to the side of the dwelling leading to a detached garage / outbuilding located towards the rear of the dwelling. The site slopes down at the rear such that the garden area is at a lower level than the house with a raised patio to the rear.
5. The Councils Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD (2011) (REA SPD) sets out some general design principles including that its main purpose is to ensure that extensions and alterations do not dominate or detract from the character of the original and surrounding houses. It goes on to state that extensions should be subordinate, should respect the original style and detailing of the host property and the materials used should match or complement those used on the original dwelling. With regard to single storey rear extensions, as a general rule, detached dwellings can be extended by up to 4 metres depth from the original rear wall to ensure subordination; any greater depth should be within a 45 degree guideline. The SPD also states that contemporary design solutions may be appropriate using high quality design and materials which complement the original house.
6. Visually, the proposed single storey rear extension would appear to 'wrap around' the existing two storey rear projection and would be of high quality, contemporary design with flat roof and finished in timber cladding externally. Whilst it would be a large addition of a greater height and depth than the extension and outbuilding it would replace, overall, it would not be significantly greater in footprint or overall size. I consider that it would be of a proportionate scale and appear as a sympathetic, albeit contrasting modern addition. It would complement the existing rear garden scene within which a number of adjoining and nearby properties have been extended to the rear in a similar way, including contemporary designs.
7. With regard to dormers, the REA SPD states that they should normally be located facing the rear garden, so they are not visible from the street and do not harm the appearance or character of the original house. They should be contained well within the body of the roof by being set well back from the eaves and sides and well below the ridge. Dormers with pitched roofs set at right angles to the main roof are preferred though it goes on to state that dormer windows in a hipped roof will not normally be acceptable 'due to overlooking and design considerations'.
8. The proposed roof dormers would also be of modern design finished in timber cladding. The right hand (northern) side dormer would be quite large

extending across much of the roofslope and from the ridge down to eaves level. Its shape with low sloping roof would contrast quite sharply with the very steeply sloping roof of the host dwelling. Whilst when viewed from the street it would appear to add bulk at roof level, it would be set back from the main road frontage such that it would not be particularly visually prominent and the original hipped roof forms of the host dwelling would remain as the prominent feature within the street scene. The rearward extent of the dormer would not be particularly noticeable due to the relative proximity of the adjoining property, No. 82.

9. The other (southern) side dormer would be more open to view from the street scene due to the gap created by the driveway between the dwelling on the appeal site and the neighbouring dwelling at No. 86. However, this dormer would be smaller, albeit would occupy a similar depth of the roof as the other dormer. However, it would be set further back on the side roofslope behind the chimney set about halfway along it which would partly screen it. As such it would not be visually prominent in the street scene and as with the other side dormer, the original hipped roof form of the host dwelling would remain as the more visually prominent roof form.
10. The proposed dormers do not satisfy all of the above REA SPD criteria. Furthermore, as with the rear extension, they are of different external materials to the original property. Nevertheless, due to their set back position and relatively limited visibility in the street scene, I do not consider that they would unacceptably dominate the roofslope of the host property nor appear unacceptably visually intrusive in the rear garden scene. In terms of the wider character of the street, it is of note that a number of other properties have been extended at roof level. Most notably, No. 86 immediately adjacent to the appeal site has very large, highly visible roof additions with elevations finished in cladding and which also appear to have resulted in an alteration to the roof form, including prominent gable front. In this context, the proposed dormers would appear less intrusive and not out of character.
11. Overall, I therefore find that the proposed alterations and extensions to the dwelling would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. They would thereby accord with Policies 7 and 26 of the Havering Local Plan (2021) which seek high quality design that provides attractive living environments and contributes to the creation of successful places in Havering through, amongst other things, development that respects and complements the distinctive qualities, character and features of the site and local area, reinforces the local streetscene and responds to and respects the established scale, massing rhythm of the building , frontages groups of buildings or building line.
12. I also find that notwithstanding that the proposed dormers do not meet all the specific detailed criteria set out within the REA SPD, the proposal would nevertheless satisfy its general aims and principles.

Conclusions

13. Conditions to ensure that the development accords with the approved plans are necessary in the interests of proper planning, clarity and to control the use of materials which are specified in the plans.

14. The Council has also suggested a condition to prevent the use of the flat roof of the rear extension as a balcony or roof garden and I agree that this is necessary in the interests of the amenity of neighbouring properties. A further condition to prevent the insertion of additional openings in the side (flank) elevation of the single storey rear/side extension would be unnecessary as no loss of privacy would result due to existing boundary features. However, with respect to the proposed dormers, side facing openings introduced into the side facing element of the larger (southern) dormer could result in overlooking therefore a condition to control this is necessary.
15. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR