



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 March 2024

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/23/3334283

40 Balgores Lane, Romford, RM2 5JT

- 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 H Spicer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P1253.23, dated 11 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 31 October 2023.
 - The proposed development is part side / part rear two storey / single storey extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Since the appeal was lodged an updated National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been published. However, the relevant parts have not materially changed therefore I have not sought further comments from the parties. I have referred to the updated paragraphs of the Framework in my decision below.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and Gidea Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a large detached two-storey dwelling of attractive design and appearance with distinctive features including gable ends and projecting bays. It is located with the southern part of the Gidea Park Conservation Area along a predominantly residential street although there are some commercial and other uses located to the north of the site along Main Road within the local centre.

Significance of the heritage asset

5. The Gidea Park Conservation Area (CA) seeks to preserve the special architectural and historical interest of the Gidea Park Estate formed of the 1910/11 and 1934 Gidea Park Exhibitions and includes the surviving fragments of the Gidea Hall landscaping. Its special interest is described in the Gidea Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals SPD (CAMP) which, amongst other things, describes the area as having a unique character of the originally designed Garden Suburb mainly comprising of a delightful variety of individual 'exhibition' houses but also including shopping

centres; later 'exhibition' houses were of a different style but blend agreeably with the original houses and provide important historical records of the architecture of the period.

6. The southern part of the CA is less spacious than the northern section but nevertheless the part of the road in which the appeal site is located is characterised mainly by detached properties set in reasonably generous sized plots. Overall, the distinctive houses combine with mature landscape to create a suburban residential area of unique history and character.
7. The appeal site is not one of the exhibition properties but was constructed between 1912 and 1927 and is one of the earliest properties on the west side of Balgores Lane influenced by the Exhibition Houses presenting the Revival of Arts and Crafts and Garden Suburb Character. It is not identified in the CAMP (Map 3: character analysis) as a locally listed building nor a building making a positive contribution to the area. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the earlier extensions to the property¹, it does contribute positively to the significance of the CA in the context of its unique character as a garden suburb due to its individual design and as part of the group along this part of Balgores Lane.

Effect of the proposals on significance

8. The previous extensions to the rear and side comprised mainly of additions to the north of the property that reflected the design and proportions of the host dwelling, replicating the gable end on its northern elevation. Whilst extending the dwelling closer to that boundary, a balanced appearance to the street scene is maintained with an appropriate gap particularly at first floor level.
9. The current scheme involves the replacement and enlargement of an existing rear hipped roof projection with one of greater width and ridge height. Its increased width would result in it extending beyond the southern flank elevation of the host dwelling towards the southern boundary where currently only single-storey additions exist. This would introduce additional bulk at first floor level which, despite it being 'set-back' from the main front elevation would nevertheless be a visible element in the street scene, reducing the gap that currently exists at first floor level by a significant degree.
10. This rear first floor element would also be visible in views across the open front garden area of the adjoining property to the south in Repton Avenue, which taken together with the proposed flat-roof bathroom addition at first floor, would result in incongruous first floor additions that would also add considerably to the bulk of the dwelling in this view.
11. Furthermore, the rear additions would be of a scale that does not reflect that of the host dwelling, with a much wider span that would appear incongruous against the relatively modest proportions of the original dwelling, particularly at first floor level.
12. Overall, these additions would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and, in turn, would harm the street scene and the significance of the CA. This would result in conflict with Policies 26 and 28 of the Haringey Local Plan 2016-2031 (2021) which promote high quality design through, amongst other things, supporting development that respects and complements the distinctive qualities, identity, character and features of

¹ Approved under Council ref: P11565.14 in 2015

the site and local area, responding to distinctive local building forms, and well-designed development in conservation areas which preserves, enhances or better reveals the character and appearance of the area and its significance.

13. It would also fail to satisfy the guidance in the Council's Heritage SPD (2011) which aims to ensure appropriate protection, enhancement and management of Havering's heritage assets by enabling sensitive responses and the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD (2011) which seeks to ensure that extensions do not dominate or detract from the character of the original dwelling.

Planning balance

14. As a result of my findings above, I conclude that there would be less than substantial harm arising in the context of paragraph 208 of the Framework. This also states that such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The additional accommodation sought is mainly to provide for the Appellant and her family and to enhance the space available within the dwelling. These are essentially private benefits, albeit I recognise that the proposal would result in a larger dwelling that could be available as part of the wider supply and some limited economic benefits would arise through the construction. However, these benefits are of limited weight and do not outweigh the harm to the significance of the heritage asset to which considerable weight must be given.
15. In respect of other policies of the Framework, the proposal would not accord with its objectives to achieve good design and development that is sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment.
16. The Appellant has made reference to permitted development rights but the CAMP and other submitted documents confirm that the appeal site is subject to an Article 4 Direction that restricts such rights.
17. I find that the proposal does not accord with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision otherwise.

Conclusions

18. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR