



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/23/3333874

6 Meadway, Romford, RM2 5NU

- 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 KMDS Designs against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P1441.23, dated 18 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 14 November 2023.
 - The proposed development is demolition of bay and outside WC and construction of single storey rear extension and internal reconfiguration.
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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 impact on the character and appearance of the host building and the Gidea Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a characterful detached two-storey dwelling set on an extensive long, narrow plot. It is one of the original cottages of the 1911 Exhibition Houses which fall within the Gidea Park Conservation Area. Meadway is residential in character though the wider area is also characterised by areas of open space including the Raphael Park Tennis Club at the western end of Meadway and golf course at its eastern end.

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; mature gardens, trees and boundary hedges form an integral part of the area's character with some exceptional trees, notably one outside No 10 Parkway. Overall, the distinctive houses combine with mature landscape to create a suburban residential area of unique history and character.

6. The dwelling on the appeal site and all houses along Parkway, with one exception, are original 1910/11 'exhibition houses' many of which were designed by influential architects of the Arts & Crafts movement. These exhibition houses formed the core of the suburb and were of different designs but of good quality materials and vernacular details and provide a succession of picturesque views with varied and complex rooflines and detailed features. The CAMP (Map 3: character analysis) identifies the dwelling on the appeal site as a 'building making a positive contribution to the area' falling within the category of 'key buildings'. The Council confirms that it is a non-designated heritage asset for the purposes of Framework paragraph 209.
7. The site lies within the northern part of the CA which the CAMP describes as having relatively generous plots. Meadway is identified as having smaller cottage units, balanced by broad verges and, together with the other nearby roads developed for the exhibition, described as the most architecturally distinguished in the CA. The area also contains evidence of the previous historic use and occupation including the ponds which lie at the southern end of the appeal site.
8. The dwelling on the appeal site is unaltered from its original form with white roughcast walls and plain tiled pitched roof over a front projecting gable end and 'catslide' roof to the side. It also contains the original window frames including bay window to the rear. The site therefore maintains many of its original features and appearance and makes a significant contribution to its significance and that of the conservation area.

Effect of the proposal on significance

9. The proposed rear extension would be of flat roofed design with parapet edge and finished in brick elevations and would extend across almost the whole width of the rear elevation of the dwelling, involving the removal of the original bay window. Whilst it would be modest in scale and of subservient size, it would introduce a building form at odds with the distinctive character and appearance of the existing cottage. The roof form and use of brick facing materials would introduce particularly incongruous features that would contrast starkly with the form and finish of the original 'exhibition' cottage.
10. The Appellant suggests that the simple design is intended to deliberately contrast with the original historic building and avoids impacting on the upper parts of the rear elevations which a pitched roof extension could not achieve as it would involve obscuring the upper floor windows and low eaves. It is also suggested that the stepped design would add interest and its modest size and siting would result in it having little impact on the wider area.
11. Whilst I would agree that the extension would be of modest size and would ensure that the spacious nature of the wider area would not be significantly affected, it would result in the loss of the important original rear bay window feature. Furthermore, I am not convinced that a smaller pitched roof addition would necessarily result in the loss of important features at the upper level

albeit would have to 'tie in' with the existing gable end and catslide roof. I note that the Appellant is willing to accept a condition to ensure a roughcast finish to match the existing dwelling, but the overall design would still be unacceptable for the reasons given above.

12. Overall, I find that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, a non-designated heritage asset, and the significance of the CA of which it is an important and integral part. 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 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.

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 enhanced accommodation for the Appellant's family. Whilst these are essentially private benefits, I recognise that the proposal would result in a larger dwelling that could be available as part of the wider local supply. In addition, there would be limited economic benefits arising as suggested by the Appellant. 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. Framework paragraph 209 is also relevant which states that the effect of an application on a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of harm and its significance. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the proposal would detract from the significance of the non-designated heritage asset and there are no factors which outweigh that harm.
16. 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.
17. I have been referred to an appeal decision relating to rear single storey extensions to a nearby property within the conservation area, no. 18 Parkway¹. Whilst the Inspector in that case found the proposal to be acceptable, there are clear differences to the scheme before me, not least that the dwelling had undergone a number of alterations and extensions, some of which would be replaced by that proposed.
18. I find that the proposal does not accord with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision otherwise.

¹ APP/B5480/D/22/3301769 dated 24 October 2022

Conclusions

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

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR