



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: 11 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/23/3328219

110 Squirrels Heath Lane, Hornchurch, RM11 2DZ

- 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 Mustafa Chayla against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0715.23, dated 12 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2023.
 - The proposed development is single storey front and rear extensions and loft conversion to include a rear dormer and front roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I sought clarity on the description of the development as that given on the forms differed from that given by the Council. In addition, the Council's decision notice clarifies that the plans on which its decision was based included "proposed floor plan Layout 8 (Scale 1:100) and proposed elevations Layout 8 (Scale 1:100)" and were provided by the Council. These plans show single storey front and rear extensions and alterations to the roof to provide a loft conversion as described above. I have therefore determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect on
 - the character and appearance of the area;
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining property, No. 108 Squirrels Heath Lane.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The existing dwelling is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling. It lies on the corner of Squirrels Heath Lane, a relatively busy main road, and Haynes Road, a quieter side road. It has a single-storey rear extension across the whole width of the dwelling.
5. The Council's 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. Rear extensions should generally be up to 4 metres in depth for a semi-detached dwelling though site specific considerations can be taken into account. Greater depths will need to take into account the 45 degree guideline to ensure a reasonable level of amenity is afforded to neighbouring properties. They should also generally be 3 metres in height with a flat roof though it also states that flat roofs may not be acceptable where seen from the street.
6. In respect of front extensions, large extensions are generally unacceptable due to the adverse effect they can have on the original house and street; where acceptable they should not project more than one metre forward of the main building line and designed to appear as part of the original house.
 7. The proposed rear extension would be almost 7 metres in depth from the original rear elevation of the dwelling; this would be greater than the depth of the original house resulting in an overly large and disproportionate addition. It would also result in a large expanse of flat roof that would be visible in the street scene of Haynes Road which would appear much larger and more dominating than the existing rear addition.
 8. The front elevation of the host dwelling is staggered with a projecting front gable, mirrored by the attached dwelling, and thereby providing a symmetrical appearance to the front elevation. The proposed front extension would extend across the whole of the front elevation but would not reflect the staggered line. Taken together with its flat roof which does not reflect the hipped roof of the host dwelling, it would appear as an unsympathetic and incongruous addition that would detract from the character of the host dwelling and the semi-detached pair of which it is an integral part.
 9. In respect of roof alterations, the REA SPD states that dormer windows should normally be located on the rear facing roofslope so they are not visible from the street and should be contained well within the body of the roof by being set well back from the eaves and setting the sides well in from any gables or party walls; they should never extend above the ridge line of the roof and well below it. However, the proposed rear dormer would be visible from the adjoining street due to the corner location of the site. Furthermore, it would extend across much of the width of the rear roofslope being set close to the party wall with the attached property and just above the eaves with only a small gap below the ridge line. As a result, it would appear as an overly large and dominant addition that would detract from the appearance of the host dwelling, the semi-detached pair and the wider street scene.
 10. Overall, the proposed extensions would be unsympathetic additions to the dwelling that would be harmful to its character and appearance and that of the street scenes within which they would be seen. This would result in conflict with Policy 7 and 26 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (2021) which seek high quality design that, amongst other things, respects, reinforces and complements the existing dwelling and local streetscene and provides attractive living environments for residents. The proposal would also fail to satisfy the guidance in the REA SPD.

Living conditions

11. The REA SPD also includes guidance that seeks to avoid overlooking and otherwise consider neighbouring amenity in respect of overshadowing and

outlook. The attached property at No. 108 Squirrels Heath Lane is of similar design and appearance to the dwelling on the appeal site with a ground floor living room window located quite close to the common boundary. The proposed front addition would be right on the boundary and would affect the light to the front living room window of this adjoining property. However, the room that this window serves is a 'through room', also served by a window to the rear, and overall due to the relatively modest depth and single storey height of the front extension, it would not unacceptably impact on the light and outlook received.

12. To the rear is a modest conservatory extension that is located up to the common boundary. The existing rear extension on the appeal site already projects to a greater depth in relation to this conservatory presenting a higher wall to the boundary. The proposed rear extension would result in an extension of much greater depth right on the boundary and whilst it would be of similar height, it would introduce an overbearing and unneighbourly addition that would result in an unacceptable loss of outlook for this adjoining property.
13. In this respect therefore, the proposal would fail to accord with HLP Policy 7 which seeks to ensure that the quality of life of existing and future residents is not adversely affected through, amongst other things, the impact on daylight / sunlight or outlook. It would also fail to accord with the aims and objectives of the REA SPD.

Other Matters

14. I have taken into account the other sites within the immediate local area referred to by the Appellant where various permissions have been granted for extensions to residential properties. Whilst noting that one did appear to include a rear extension of similar depth, there is little information relating to the particular circumstances relating to the individual sites. In particular, I note that none of them occupy corner locations such as the appeal site before me. Therefore, I find them of limited weight in support of the appeal scheme.

Conclusions

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

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR