



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2024

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/23/3336175

2 Crescent Walk, Aveley, Thurrock, RM15 4HP

- 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 A Begum against the decision of Thurrock Council.
 - The application Ref 23/01162/HHA, dated 22 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as a 'single storey side and rear extension.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the existing building and the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on the corner of Crescent Walk and Hall Road which is part of a larger development where a number of streets surrounding contains formally laid out speculative housing which appears to date from the mid-twentieth century. The local area contains terraced and semi-detached dwellings which have a symmetry in their placement with a consistent building line and setback with open front gardens with some dwellings having small boundary walls or open vegetated front gardens with no boundary walls. There are also visual gaps in and around dwellings where glimpses to the tops of trees in rear gardens are experienced and is a positive characteristic of the area alongside front gardens and grass verges between the footways and the road and at prominent corners. On my site visit I noticed very similar functional designs, coaxial chimney stacks, brown/red brick with hipped roof forms, whereas dwellings on corners appeared to have more prominence and status whereby they faced diagonally to the intersection and contained pitched and gabled elements.
4. The appeal site is one half of a semi-detached property and is one of the characteristic corner plots where the dwellings are positioned diagonally to the intersection and therefore is more prominent and given its position on a corner plot, has more facades of the dwelling exposed to the public realm. The building comprises of a main two storey component with pitched and gabled roof and maintains setbacks to Hall Road and Crescent Walk with a grass verge to the front which assists in reinforcing the spacious qualities of the locality. At this particular location Crescent Walk also ends as a cul-de-sac with long

ranging views to the open countryside beyond. These positive elements reinforce the local character, appearance and distinctiveness of the area.

5. In undertaking extensions and alterations to existing buildings, the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (CSPMD) Policy PMD2 and Policy CSTP22 are design led policies which have a number of design criteria to adhere to such as being high quality, renewable and low emission technology, respond positively to the character of the area, promote continuity, amongst others. CSPMD Policy CSTP23 is directly related to the Thurrock area and seeks to protect, manage and enhance the character of Thurrock to ensure improved quality and a strengthened sense of place. The Thurrock Design Guide Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supports the design policies of the CSPMD and provides further guidance on residential extensions, their design and placement.
6. The proposed extension would have a flat roof and extend to the rear of the dwelling as well as projecting past the side elevation to the side boundary. Given the unusual triangular shape of the plot, the proposed extension would run parallel to the boundary and form a pointed end to the proposed extension. The proposal to extend to the side and rear would substantially increase the footprint of the existing dwelling where the proposal would incorporate an elongated flat section with angled form that would be much more overcomplicated when compared to the more simple and functional design of the existing building. Additionally, the proposal would mean that there would be the erosion of much of the visual gap to the side and rear, which is a positive characteristic of this particular locality.
7. The proposed extensions would create a materially larger dwelling and form unlike anything around and could not be seen as being a subservient addition when considering the form as an extension. Given that the dwelling is part of a pair of semi-detached dwellings the proposed extension when experienced with No.74 Hall Road would have a substantially larger mass and visual bulk in the street scene and create a dwelling and built form that would have an awkward and cramped appearance with loss of spaciousness in and around the dwelling when experienced on what is a relatively small plot of land.
8. I appreciate comments in the appellant's SoC that the building is not in a conservation area or locally listed, however planning policies PMD2 and Policies CSTP22 and CSTP23 together with the SPD seek that development reflects the surrounding context and characteristics of the locality, regardless of any designation. Whilst I can appreciate that design elements such as matching materials, reducing the scale and increasing the setback from the front facade from a previous application have been undertaken to reduce the visual bulk, the architectural approach in the current scheme is unconvincing due to the amount of visual bulk, massing and the overall size when seen and experienced on what is a small and awkwardly shaped plot of land.
9. In conclusion of this matter, the proposed side and rear extensions when combined would have an overcomplicated design that would result in the loss of positive characteristics such as the visual gap in and around dwellings; and would be clearly disproportionate and the additional visual bulk and massing would be unlike other extensions constructed within the immediate vicinity. Consequently, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building, and the local distinctiveness of the locality on this

prominent corner location and be contrary to CSPMD planning policies PMD2 and Policies CSTEP22 and CSTEP23 together with the SPD as described previously.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

J Somers
INSPECTOR