



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2024 by R Parker BSc (Hons)

Decision by S Edwards BA MA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/24/3337747

16 Dunster Crescent, Hornchurch, Havering RM11 3QD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Daniel Constable against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref is P0904.23.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Conversion of garage to a habitable room and a new roof over the garage and porch.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and on highway safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

4. Dunster Crescent is a residential road characterised by a consistent and uniform appearance. The appeal property is part of a group of broadly matching semi-detached dwellings with flat roofed front garage projections. Despite some alterations, this relatively unique form clearly defines the character of this part of the area. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached house with a small forecourt and flat roofed front projection containing a garage and porch, in harmony with the character of its surrounding area.
5. The addition of a pitched garage roof would be in jarring contrast to the appearance of neighbouring properties. The rhythm of the Crescent would be disrupted, resulting in the front projection of this property becoming overly dominant and visually intrusive.
6. The appellant has cited instances of comparison within the neighbourhood. I do not have the full details of the circumstances of construction of these developments, and therefore can have no certainty that they are a direct parallel to the appeal proposal. 6 Dunster Crescent (no 6) has been extended,

including the addition of a pitched roof. This has undoubtedly changed its character and appearance. However, due to its corner position on the Crescent, it sits at an angle to the larger group of dwellings, creating a partial gateway effect. Therefore, the addition of a pitched roof does not disrupt the visual rhythm of the street.

7. Similarly, 2 and 4 Dunster Crescent are positioned separately to the rest of the Crescent, presenting as a stand-alone pair. Consequently, the alterations made to these properties do not detract from the character of the stretch of houses to which the appeal site belongs. In addition, the Council has stated that these alterations predate the current local plan, and therefore the policy context is not comparable to that of this appeal. Other examples presented on Berkley Drive and Berkley Close have a different context to the appeal site and are not visible from it. They have therefore been ascribed very limited weight.
8. The appeal proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area, and therefore conflicts with the design aims of Policy D4 of the London plan (March 2021) and Policy 26 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (Local Plan) (Adopted November 2021). This policy notably seeks to promote high quality design by supporting development proposals that respect the visual integrity and established scale, massing, and rhythm of their surroundings. The proposed development also fails to accord with the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Adopted 2011), which stresses the importance of maintaining the uniformity and symmetry of semi-detached housing.

Highway Safety

9. The appeal property's driveway is shallow, and therefore realistically is likely to be used for parking only one car, at an angle. The proposed garage conversion would result in a loss of parking, reducing the property's parking provision to 1 space. This would be below the Havering Local Plan's required number of 1.5 spaces for dwellings with 3 or more bedrooms, due to the area's low public transport access (PTAL).
10. Parking pressure on Dunster Crescent is high. There is a parking bay on the opposite side of the road, but I observed that there were almost no available spaces in the vicinity of the appeal site. I visited the area on a weekday around midday, and a reasonable expectation would be for the volume of on-street parking to increase beyond my observations by the evening, when residents return from work.
11. Furthermore, the large number of cars parked on the street restricts useable highway space, making the road effectively single file. The loss of parking occurring as a result of the proposal is likely to add to the existing parking pressure in the area, due to the constrained size of the site's frontage. Consequently, demand for parking within the site's immediate vicinity would in all likelihood increase and thus so too illegal, inconsiderate, or obstructive parking.
12. While I appreciate that the appellant may only have one small car, and therefore no need of further parking, this may change in the future. I must also have regard to the needs of any future occupants, who may have larger or more vehicles. The appellant refers to permitted development rights, but limited information regarding this has been presented, so I cannot be certain

that any details are comparable to the appeal scheme. Further statements about the suitability of Dunster Crescent's internal garages for modern cars and about the size of the driveway at no 6 are unsupported by detailed evidence and therefore are given very limited weight.

13. Due to a reduction in on-site provision, the appeal proposal would be likely to increase local parking demand in an area already experiencing parking stress, risking increasing illegal, inconsiderate, or obstructive parking. Accordingly, the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety, and therefore conflicts with Policy 24 of the Local Plan. It also conflicts with the SPD which requires that where a front extension removes parking to the front of the house it must be satisfactorily achieved elsewhere within the curtilage of the dwelling. However, the proposal does not conflict with Policy T6.1 of the London Plan, which relates to parking provision for new residential development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Parker

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR