



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2024 by T Morris BA (Hons) MSc

Decision by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/24/3347388

101 Thornhill, North Weald, Essex CM16 6DP

- 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 Ms Kim Smith against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
- The application Ref is EPF/1808/23.
- The development proposed is single storey front extension.

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.

Preliminary Matter

3. The Council's decision notice and its Committee Minutes do not specify the specific 'adjoining property' or any specific aspects of 'amenity' which it considers would be harmed by the proposed development. In the circumstances I have defined the second main issue on the basis of the effect of the proposal generally on the living conditions of occupiers of adjoining neighbouring properties.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, and
 - ii) the living conditions of occupiers of adjoining neighbouring properties.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site is located on Thornhill, an extensive residential street featuring dwellings of varying styles, some of which have front porch extensions. No 101 Thornhill (No 101) is located on a cul-de-sac offshoot on Thornhill, characterised by groups of terraced, two-storey dwellings which are setback from the road. There is a prevailing cohesiveness across these groups due to their similarly pitched roofs, regular window proportions and comparable composition of materials with tile or UPVC cladding the predominant finish to

front elevations. Where front projections exist, they are generally small porches or canopies and more often have roof forms which are set well below the upper floor windows. Indeed, modest porches with discreet roof forms are characteristic of the terraced row that No 101 forms part of and the neighbouring terraced row at Nos 96 – 100 Thornhill.

6. The extension would span the ground floor front elevation of No 101 with a roof line sitting just below its upper floor window. This would significantly contrast with the more modestly proportioned porch projections on neighbouring dwellings within the appeal terrace and the immediate neighbouring terrace. The brickwork would further differentiate it from the predominant cladded finishes to front elevations. The mixed roof style incorporating a mono-pitched roof with a gable feature above the front door would further draw the eye. Consequently, the extension would appear as a discordant addition which would not reflect the general cohesiveness of the terraced dwellings on this part of Thornhill.
7. The appellant's submission includes examples of other front extensions in the area. The nearest example to the appeal site is at 118 Thornhill. That particular extension sits within a different terraced row and it is not of a form reflective of the prevailing appearance of the terraces to this part of Thornhill. It also does not span the full width of No 118 and so is not comparable to the appeal proposal. The other examples relate to different sections of Thornhill. The front extension at 24 Thornhill appears less obtrusive in the context of the semi-detached dwellings there and because it is set back from the front of that particular dwelling. The front extension at 44A Thornhill extends across only part of the front elevation and the top of its roof is set well down from upper floor windows so appears more sympathetic to its host building than the appeal proposal. Consequently, the examples provided do not persuade me that the proposed development would be acceptable having regard to its own site-specific factors.
8. I conclude, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. In that particular regard, it would conflict with Policy DM9 (High Quality Design) of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Part One (2023) (LP) insofar of its requirements that development proposals must achieve a high quality of design and relate positively to their local context including drawing on the local character.

Neighbouring Living Conditions

9. The adjoining property at No 100 Thornhill is set forward of the appeal terrace with brickwork to the section of its side elevation facing the proposed development site and an intervening side access path. In the circumstances, I am satisfied that there would be no material effects resulting from the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of this adjoining neighbouring property.
10. The other adjoining neighbouring property at No 102 is a mid-terraced dwelling with its front elevation built in line with the front elevation of the appeal dwelling at No 101. The front elevation of No 102 features a porch which is sited adjacent to the side boundary with No 101. The porch at No 102 includes glazing to its front and side elevations.

11. The proposed single storey front extension would be sited adjacent to the porch at No 102. However, whilst the extension would also be deeper than the porch, any reduction in levels of sunlight, daylight and outlook would primarily be experienced at the porch and not to a room where occupants would typically spend more time. Furthermore, any potential for effects on light received within the porch would be further limited by the north-east orientation of the front of these dwellings. Finally, there would be no material effects on privacy noting the position of the proposal to the front of the terrace which is already visible in public views and given that windows are not proposed to the side elevation facing the porch at No 102.
12. The proposed development would therefore have an acceptable effect on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties. In this regard, the proposal would comply with the relevant sections of Policy DM9 (High Quality Design) of the LP, which include that development proposals must take account of the privacy and amenity of neighbouring occupiers, provide good sunlight, daylight and open aspects to adjacent buildings and not result in an over-bearing or overly enclosed form of development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. I have found that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties.
14. However, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area and in this respect would conflict with the development plan. Therefore, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

T Morris

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

M Russell

INSPECTOR