



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2024

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/D/24/3352906

11 Woodberry Way, Chingford E4 7DY

- 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 Mr Alun Watkins against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application reference is 241761.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension, converted loft with dormers, remodelling of side extension at first floor level and other alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. While the appellant has described the proposal as in the above heading, the Council has referred to it as a single storey rear extension; an alteration to the existing 2-storey side extension; a dormer roof extension to the main rear roof; installation of roof lights onto the front roof slope; new windows and a front door; and alterations to the canopy above the front porch. From my inspection of the plans, I consider that the Council's description more fully and accurately reflects the development sought. I have assessed the proposal on that basis.
3. On 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework 2024) was published. The Framework 2024 does not raise any new matters that are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached house within a predominantly residential area. Along Woodberry Way, I saw that semi-detached and detached dwellings predominate with some variety to their scale, design and general appearance partly due to various external alterations and extensions that have been carried out.
6. The appellant places some reliance on the precedents that he considers have been created by additions to dwellings elsewhere along Woodberry Way, especially those that have recently been approved by the Council. Having spent some time looking at the area around the site, I agree that there are examples in the vicinity of

the site where elements of what is now proposed at No 11 have been constructed. These changes now form part of the character and appearance of the area to which the site belongs. It is also a central principle of the planning system that each development should be considered on its own merits, which I have done.

7. A new dormer is to be placed onto an extended rear roof slope, with the top set just below the ridgeline. Although set back from the edges of the host roof, the new addition would still be considerable in width and scale. With its flat roof, the new dormer would appear as an overly large 'box like' extension, the size and bulk of which would give the host building an awkward top-heavy appearance even with the proposed ground floor extension in place. The additional built form, as proposed, would also imbalance the pair to which No 11 belongs, as the attached property is free of significant extensions at roof level. While the new dormer would not be visible from the road, it would be highly conspicuous from the rear gardens of the properties on either side of the site. From these locations, this element of the proposal would be obtrusive and overly dominant even with other changes proposed at the rear of No 11 in place.
8. I observed that the neighbouring property at 13 Woodberry Way includes a sizeable rear dormer as do some other properties in the local area. These examples serve to illustrate that changes made at roof level to a building can have a significant impact on the character and appearance of that property and its surroundings. While the proposal is like the existing dormer at No 13, the neighbouring property is detached and so it is not directly comparable with No 11. Even if the Council has been inconsistent in deciding to approve sizeable dormer extensions elsewhere and not here, this does not justify allowing an unacceptable form of development.
9. At the front of No 41, the existing side projection is to be altered with the upper front elevation, as proposed, set back from the main front wall and its roof line set down from the main ridge, albeit not to the extent that the Council would consider to be appropriate. Nevertheless, these proposed alterations have been designed to complement the form and scale of the existing house. The changes would be a proportionate addition to the host building that would not unduly compromise the architectural integrity of the house. I saw that several other properties along Woodberry Way include 2-storey side projections with little, if any, set back from their main front wall with no detriment to the qualities of the host building or the street scene. On that basis, the proposed alterations to the side extension would not be an uncharacteristic or incongruous feature of the appeal dwelling or the local area, when seen from the road.
10. The additional built form to be introduced to one side of the appeal dwelling would alter the sense of balance between the front elevations of No 11 and its attached counterpart, which are similar in design. At present, the relationship between these attached properties is already significantly disrupted by the existing 2-storey side projection to No 11 and its forward projecting porch canopy, both of which are absent at the attached property. In those circumstances, the proposal would not fundamentally change that position nor cause any significant disharmony to the pair. The clipped gable end to the side addition would not be a significant feature of the finished dwelling, and there is no evidence to demonstrate that it would be likely to set an undesirable precedent. Ample space would also remain around the front and side of the completed dwelling to ensure that the new side extension would not create a terracing effect, in which neighbouring buildings visually merge

due to their close visual relationship. Notwithstanding these favourable findings, from my inspection of the plans, the proposed alterations to the side projection are not clearly severable to the new dormer, which is objectionable.

11. The Council raises no objection to the remainder of the appeal scheme. From the submitted evidence, I see no reason to reach a different opinion on these aspects of the proposal. Nevertheless, I conclude on the main issue that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policy 53 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Part 1 and Policy D4 of The London Plan. These policies promote good design and seek to ensure that development proposals, amongst other things, respond appropriately to their context.
12. Once complete, the enlarged house would enable the needs of the appellant's close family to be met when they stay over. Others raise no objection and there would be no adverse effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. The roof level changes would enable the house to become gas free and heated using more green energy. That the scheme has been refined during a lengthy application process in the light of the feedback received from the Council is also noted. However, these considerations, taken individually and together, do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue.

Conclusion

13. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan. There are no material considerations, including those of the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.
14. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR