



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

by **C Mayes CMLI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/24/3356263

231 Westrow Drive, Barking IG11 9BS

- 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 Singh Developments (UK) Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref is 24/01270/HSE.
 - The development proposed is described as: Proposed first floor side extension and alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal was lodged the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been updated. I am satisfied there are no changes of any consequence for the main issue in this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey end terrace dwelling, with loft space converted to dwelling rooms. The surrounding area consists of, predominantly, two-storey dwellings and has a suburban residential character. Dwellings are arranged in terraced blocks of 4 properties with consistent spaces between each block. The application of varied bay window styles, entrance door treatments and roof forms further distinguish the appearance of each block. Consequently, the street has a consistent and harmonious pattern with each terraced block contributing distinctly to the character and appearance of the area.
5. Several residential streets intersect with Westrow Drive. While character remains consistent along the length of the street, each intersection divides the street into groups of terraced blocks, adding further interest. The appeal site is within a group of terraced blocks between the intersections with Woodbridge Road and Hepworth Gardens. While some of the end terrace properties in this group have single-storey or two-storey side extensions all the respective terraced blocks remain separated by gaps at first floor, which reinforces the distinctive appearance of the area in this group.

6. The proposal is to erect a first-floor side extension over an existing flat-roofed ground floor extension to the host dwelling. The extension would meet the boundary with the neighbouring property, No 229, the end terrace dwelling of the adjacent block. The extension would be constructed from materials to match, and be flush with, the façade of the host dwelling.
7. As No 229 has been extended to the side, at ground and first floor, up to the shared boundary with No 231, the proposal would fill the existing gap between the two terraced blocks. This would create a cramped form of development that would not be in keeping with the spacing of terraced blocks predominantly seen along Westrow Drive. Consequently, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. The appellant has referred to permissions granted by the Council for two-storey side extensions to end terraced properties. Each of these examples results in the infilling of an existing gap between respective terraced blocks. As such, the appellant considers the proposal to be consistent with the current and emerging character of the area. However, as the examples remain few, and none are within this group of dwellings, as described above, I do not find that they contribute directly or positively to the local distinctiveness of the area or appeal site. Furthermore, they are some distance from the appeal site and relate to properties with different architectural detailing, and therefore they are not directly comparable to the proposal. Rather than providing justification for the development in question, if anything, their presence points to the need for such proposals to be carefully controlled if the character and appearance of the area is to be safeguarded. As such, I have afforded this matter limited weight in my assessment.
9. The appellant also makes the case that the proposal will result in a high-quality building that will bring symmetry and balance to the row of dwellings. However, the architectural treatment of the terraced blocks terminated by the appeal site and No 229 is different and distinct. As such, the current symmetry seen across the 4 properties of each terraced block would be effectively replaced by a single, longer terrace of 2 differing halves. While the materials proposed may match the host property, the overall form and scale would fail to respect and complement the consistent and harmonious pattern of development that predominates along the street.
10. The appellant also argues that the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document, 2012, (SPD) relates to policies in a former Local Plan and should be considered outdated. However, I am satisfied that the SPD's general principles remain relevant and supported by the policies within the current London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Local Plan, September 2024, (the Local Plan). As such, the SPD has been a material consideration in my assessment.
11. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with the SPD, which sets out that side extensions should avoid closing gaps between buildings where gaps make a positive contribution to the character of an area. As such, the proposal does not accord with Policies SP2, DMD1 and DMD5 of the Local Plan and Policy D4 of the London Plan, March 2021. Together, these seek to ensure, among other things, that development relates and is sensitive to local

distinctiveness, and respects, complements and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Other Matters

12. The appellant refers to another appeal decision relating to the property. However, the Inspector in that case was considering a different proposal and subsequently the circumstances are materially different. This matter attracts only limited weight in favour of the proposal that does not outweigh the harm identified or my finding that the proposal does not accord with the Local Plan.
13. The appeal proposal would involve a more efficient use of previously developed land, for which the Framework provides general support. It would also accord with certain principles set out in the National Design Guide, including the use of high-quality materials and a general design approach that responds to the existing character of the host property, although not the wider area. These considerations attract moderate weight in favour of the proposal, but do not outweigh the harm identified or my finding that the proposal does not accord with the Local Plan.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

C Mayes

INSPECTOR