



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2025

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/24/3358232

165 Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, Thurrock, RM15 5HH

- 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 David McCarthy against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01100/HHA.
 - The development proposed is side extension over ground and first floor to create additional bedrooms and living room.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. In Part E of the appeal form a different wording has been entered, but as the parties have not provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed I have used the one given on the original application.
3. Since the appeal was lodged, revisions have been made to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published in December 2024. Having reviewed the changes, I am satisfied that they do not affect the substantive matters of the appeal, and that proceeding without seeking further comments from the parties would not be prejudicial to their cases.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and locality.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is an end-terrace house located in a residential area which appears cohesive in terms of the design and siting of dwellings. Over time, various extensions and alterations have introduced diversity, but the original style of properties and development pattern remains characteristic.
6. The appeal property is prominently located in the street scene as it stands forward of a group of dwellings arranged in a 'crescent' around a central green space. As a result of this siting on the corner, the appeal plot is largely triangular in shape, with much of the garden being to the side of the property.

7. There are many single- and two-storey side extensions visible in the area, although most are more modest in width and depth than proposed in this case, due to their narrower plot widths. However, the treatment at corner sites varies, and there are some large additions at the junctions.
8. Policy CSTP22 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) 2015 (CS) requires proposals to demonstrate high quality design founded on a thorough understanding of, and positive response to, the local context. This is reinforced by guidance in the Thurrock Design Guide Residential Alterations & Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (SPD), which amongst other criteria requires extensions to respect and respond positively to the character of the original dwelling, with a form and scale appropriate to it and the surrounding development pattern. In particular, it notes that corner plots require a distinct design approach that responds positively not only to the dwelling but also to the neighbouring houses and the street scene.
9. I appreciate the efforts made to minimise the effect of the extension on the host house and the street scene, but it would nevertheless be a dominant addition. Window placement may be symmetrical, but this would not address the disproportionate width relative to the original dwelling. The size would not be mitigated by the modest insets from the front and rear elevations of the building and the lowered ridge height, nor by the use of matching materials, roof pitch, fenestration, and detailing. In particular, the almost flush front elevation would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of extensions, which are generally set back further from the façade, particularly at first-floor level. The roof would appear awkward, as the front roof slope of the extension would be so close to that of the host house that it would break the roofline without creating a meaningful visual break. This would emphasise the increased width and bulk of the property.
10. Whilst I accept that the building would not appear cramped on the plot, I share the Council's view that the spacing between groups of properties contribute to the character and appearance of the locality, and consider that an extension of the size proposed would materially reduce the openness of the plot and the gap between buildings. This would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene and locality. I note the appellant's view that the proposal would make efficient use of an underutilized wide plot, but the absence of built form at this point makes its own positive contribution to the street scene. I am not persuaded that functional rooms sufficient to meet modern living standards would only be achievable in an extension of the size proposed.
11. The appellant has drawn attention to some extensions in Foyle Road, and others were apparent at the appeal site visit. However, no relevant planning permissions have been supplied, and it is not known if these developments pre-date the adoption of the Council's current planning policies and guidance. As most extensions in the vicinity appear to be more proportionate and subordinate than proposed in this case, on the basis of the available information, these larger examples offer limited support to the proposal.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and locality. It would conflict with the design requirements of the Framework, to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment; and contrary to CS Policies

CSTP22, CSTP23, PMD2, and guidance in the SPD, which together seek to protect, manage and enhance the character of Thurrock, and to ensure that development contributes positively to the character of the area.

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR