



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2025

by **Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/24/3355491

40 Balgores Lane, Romford RM2 5JT

- 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 Mrs H Spicer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application reference is P0912.24.
 - The development proposed is the erection of single storey side and rear and part first floor rear extensions with roof alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. On 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework 2024) was published with an amendment issued on 7 February 2025. The Framework 2024, as amended, does not raise any new matters that are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a mainly 2-storey detached house of individual design within a good-sized plot on a predominantly residential street of properties that have similar characteristics. It falls within the Gidea Park Conservation Area (CA), which covers an extensive area. The CA derives its significance as a designated heritage asset primarily from the spacious layout of the estate that was originally planned as a Garden Suburb and the attractive mix of housing within it, which largely date from the early 20th Century. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
5. The appeal dwelling is not listed nor is it one of the houses that was originally built for the 1910/11 Gidea Park Exhibition. Nevertheless, it typifies the individual style and generous layout of properties within the CA and so it reflects the historical growth of the area. To my mind, it also adds to the sense of unity and cohesion in the existing built form along Balgores Lane, which is locally distinctive. Despite previous extensions and alterations made to the existing dwelling, No 40 still

positively contributes to character and appearance of the CA even though it is not identified as such in the Gidea Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals.

6. The proposal is to extend and alter the dwelling with new additions on 2 sides of the house. It follows a different proposal to enlarge No 40 that was recently refused planning permission on application and at appeal. By significantly altering the design and scale of the proposal, the appellant considers that the objections that were raised to the previous scheme have been overcome.
7. The new ground floor element would infill a recess at the side of the dwelling and extend across a significant part of the property's width. It would, therefore, be a sizeable addition. There would also be a new first floor component to one side of the existing rear projection with a new central gable and a feature window at first floor level. When seen from the back garden of the site, the new rear elevation would be overwhelmed by the considerable scale and mass of the proposed extensions. Its considerable bulk would be accentuated by the overly large and visually dominant central gable.
8. The overall size of the new additions could not reasonably be described as subordinate to the house, which is normally expected of extensions in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Extensions and Alterations*. When seen together with the previous alterations and extensions, the proposed changes would be of a scale where the form of the original building would be unduly compromised even with external materials to match those of the existing dwelling.
9. By diminishing the positive contribution of No 40 to the character and appearance of the CA, the proposal would reduce the significance of this designated heritage asset. As a result, the character and appearance of the CA would not be preserved. I appreciate that little of the proposal would be seen beyond the back garden of No 40 with glimpses possible of the first-floor additions possible from neighbouring gardens. Nevertheless, the statutory duty and the Council's planning policies in relation to conservation areas do not distinguish between residential extensions that are available to public view and those that are not.
10. Given the considerable size of the CA, the harm would be less than substantial. In those circumstances, the Framework 2024, as amended, states that the harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Once complete, the additional living space would enhance the living conditions of the appellant and her family. However, these benefits are largely private and do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
11. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. Accordingly, it is contrary to Policies 26 and 28 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031. These policies support high-quality, well-designed development that preserves, enhances or better reveals the character and appearance of the CA.
12. For the same reasons, it also conflicts with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Heritage*, which aims to ensure appropriate protection, enhancement and management of heritage assets by enabling sensitive responses. The proposal would also be at odds with the Framework 2024, as amended, insofar as it seeks to ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area and are sympathetic to local character.

13. The appellant is critical of the Council's approach, regarding some of the tone and language used by Officers to be excessive. The appellant also states that a site notice was not displayed, and that the application was not treated in accordance with procedure. Reference is also made to the planning history of the site. From the submitted evidence, I have no firm evidence that the Council did not follow the correct procedure to publicise the application. For the avoidance of doubt, I have assessed the proposal afresh and on its own planning merits.
14. The Officer's report records that interested parties raise several additional concerns including the effect of the proposal on light, wildlife, traffic flows, carbon footprint and the potential disturbance to others during the construction phase. These are all important matters, and I have taken into account all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the main issue, these considerations have not been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

15. 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.
16. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR