



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2025

by **Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/25/3367167

19 College Avenue, Grays RM17 5UN

- 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 M Karim against the decision of Thurrock Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00065/HHA.
 - The development proposed is part single part two storey rear extension; side and front extension alterations to roof with gates to frontage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and on the local area, and
 - The effect of the proposed roof terrace on the living conditions of the surrounding neighbours, with particular regard to overlooking and loss of privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a detached residential dwelling on the south side of College Avenue, and within a predominantly residential area.
4. Although I have been provided with limited additional information, the Council and the Appellant have referred to the properties on both sides of this part of College Avenue being designated under Policy CSTP23 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) 2015 (Core Strategy) as a residential precinct which acknowledges the distinctive spacious character of the local area, with the objective to protect manage and enhance the character of Thurrock to ensure improved quality and strengthened sense of place. This part of College Avenue comprises an attractive variety of generously proportioned individual houses on both sides of the road, most with a range of roof slopes, asymmetrical designs and fenestration features within a very verdant setting. Although the individual houses are of generous proportions, there is a sense of spaciousness between dwellings which is assisted by the design of the individual properties, with, amongst other features, cat slide roofs and garages to the side.

- The existing appeal property includes many of the features which contribute to the local distinctiveness of this area, including, amongst other features, an asymmetrical design with cat slide roof, the deep porch roof and side garage.
5. The proposal would remodel the existing property with a two storey front and side extensions, and single and two storey extensions to the rear. There would be a crown roof with a rear dormer and front roof lights. The extended and altered property would be symmetrical in appearance at the front with a projecting gabled front bay extending above eaves height. At the rear there would be shallow bays above the ground floor rear extension with a terrace / balcony extending the full width of the property.
 6. The proposed remodelling would remove the existing distinctive features and appearance of the property. The two storey side extensions would result in the extended property filling the substantial width of the plot and with a widened hipped and crown roof, a visually more solid roof form. The design would result in a symmetrical and unrelieved appearance to the front which would be at stark variance with the more detailed design features of most of the surrounding properties.
 7. At the rear there would be more articulation in the design although the overall scale and massing would appear very heavy and overbearing compared with the surrounding properties.
 8. The combined effect of the increased scale and massing and repetitive and symmetrical design approach would result in an over prominent dwelling which would appear incongruous alongside the more varied properties in the street scene. The absence of any of the locally distinctive design features which are part of the character and appearance of the existing property would detract from the local distinctiveness of this area and as a result harm the character and appearance of the local area.
 9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would materially harm the character and appearance of the existing property and of the local area. This would conflict with Policies PMD2, CSTP22 and CSTP23 of the Core Strategy and criteria in the Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD 2017 (SPD) and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) with particular regard to Section 12, all of which amongst other matters seek a high quality of design which respects the local context.
 10. In my assessment, I have taken into account the recent extensions, including boundary treatment undertaken to the adjoining property to the immediate east of the appeal site at no 17 College Avenue with a side return to Bradleigh Avenue. However, this retains a greater sense of spaciousness on the corner plot and incorporates an element of an asymmetrical frontage and retains some of the original design features. It does not therefore compare with the proposal before me.
 11. The Appellant has also drawn my attention to other examples of extensions and redesign of existing properties in the local area, although most of these would not appear to fall within the same designated residential precinct area as the appeal property. Each proposal must be considered on its individual merits but in so far as the information has been provided to me, I have taken them into account. However, the wider surrounding area does not share the same local distinctiveness as the part of College Avenue within which the appeal property is situated and their impact

on the street scene is not therefore in my view directly comparable. Furthermore, a number of these examples do not appear directly comparable in terms of undertaking a comparison both between the scale, form and design of the previous property and the proposed extensions, as well as in terms of the relationship to the surrounding properties. The presence of a number of contemporary remodelling and redesigns of existing properties within the local area does not persuade me to reach a different conclusion in respect of the proposal before me, given the harm I have concluded.

Living Conditions

12. The proposal would introduce a first floor rear terrace/ balcony along the full width of the extended property. Privacy screens would be provided to both the side returns.
13. There are some existing views from the rear facing windows at first floor level and above towards neighbouring gardens on either side, and this is not unusual in suburban situations. However, the provision of a full width terrace would allow open and unrestricted views over the neighbouring gardens which, because of the extended depth of the terrace compared with the existing rear wall together with the length of the proposed terrace would increase the extent of overlooking available to an unacceptable degree. This would result in harm to the living conditions of the neighbours through overlooking and loss of privacy.
14. I therefore conclude that the living conditions of the neighbours on either side of the appeal property would be materially harmed through increased overlooking and loss of privacy. This would conflict with Policy PMD1 of the Core Strategy and the SPD and the Framework with particular regard to paragraph 135, all of which amongst other matters seek a high quality of design which respects the amenities of existing and future occupiers.
15. A concern has also been raised that the increased glazing on the front elevation would harm the living conditions of the neighbours directly opposite on the north side of College Avenue. However, given the spacing between the properties and the nature of the proposed central large glazed window to serve the hallway and stairs, I am satisfied that there would be no material harm to the neighbours' living conditions in this regard.

Other Considerations

16. I have also noted the pre-application response in respect of the proposal now before me, but I am required to consider each proposal on its individual merits which has been the basis of my assessment.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including in representations, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR