Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 June 2018

by Les Greenwood MRTP

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 25th June 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/18/3199533

98 Westrow Drive, Barking IG11 9BN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Ahmed Kambiz Raofi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- The application Ref 17/02093/FUL was refused by notice dated 13 February 2018.
- The development proposed is a double storey side extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Clarification

2. The appellant’s statement asks for an amended plan to be considered as part of the proposal, but I have not received that plan. The submission of amended plans is not, in any case, generally appropriate within the householder appeal process because there is no opportunity for the Council or others to comment. I have considered this appeal on the basis of the plans on which the Council decided the application.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the house and this part of Westrow Drive.

Reasons

4. Westrow Drive is a residential street of terraced houses, mainly designed with hipped roofs on the end of rows and gaps at first floor level between the blocks of houses. No 98 is fairly typical of the street, a 1930s style 2 storey end of terrace house with a feature bay window at the front and a single storey garage to the side. Its hipped roof was being converted to a gable at the time of my site visit. The proposal is to replace the garage with a 2 storey extension, built up to the side boundary and with a full gable.

5. The Council’s Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions and Alterations (SPD) expects that first floor side extensions will be set off the side boundary where the gaps between buildings contribute positively to the character of the area. The original layout here included gaps between the terraces at first floor and roof level. These gaps allow views, light and air
through, giving some relief from the otherwise heavily built up nature of the street. Many have been either partially or fully infilled by extensions, but others remain open and are an important part of the street scene.

6. The visual gap between No 98 and the next house, No 96, has been partially closed off already by hip to gable extensions on both sides. The proposal would take this much further, leaving a gap only on No 96’s side of the boundary. I find that the loss of much of the remaining gap would be significantly harmful to local character, eroding the openness of the street. The character of the house would also be harmed, though to a lesser extent, by the use of a full gable rather than a hipped roof, which is a characteristic feature of the local architectural style.

7. I note the appellant’s argument that setting the first floor of the side extension in from the boundary, as the Council may have suggested, would have design implications of its own but that matter is not before me and I am not aware of any planning permission for such an alternative scheme. The appellant suggests that the side wall of the extension would be set in from the side boundary by 0.25m in order to allow for a roof overhang. This inset is not shown on the plans though.

8. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the house and of this part of Westrow Drive. It therefore conflicts with the aims of Policies BP8 and BP11 of the Council’s Borough Wide Development Policies and the SPD, to ensure that development protects or enhances local character and helps to create a sense of local identity, distinctiveness and place.

9. I recognise the appellant’s reasonable wish to improve this home. I am not aware, however, of any specific need of such strength that it would override my objections in regard to the main issue. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

*Les Greenwood*

INSPECTOR