

December 2024

Householder Application

Design and Access Statement & Planning Statement dated December 2024

First-floor side extension and alteration to the front façade (amended)



Address: 52 Nelmes Way, Hornchurch RM11 2QZ

1. Background

An application was approved for the almost identical development on 28th June 2024 (Council's reference P0624.24). This proposal seeks a minor change to the front façade by introducing two front dormer windows replacing the approved one front dormer window.

1. Site & Surrounding:

1.1 The application site is a detached dwellinghouse located on the western side of Nelmes Way, Hornchurch. The site is not located within a Conservation Area; however, it is located within the Emerson Park Character Area. The Havering Local Plan describes Emerson Park as *'...one the most mature and successful residential districts in the borough. It has a distinctive character and is typified by large, well maintained single-family detached dwellings set within spacious plots with mature landscaping.'*

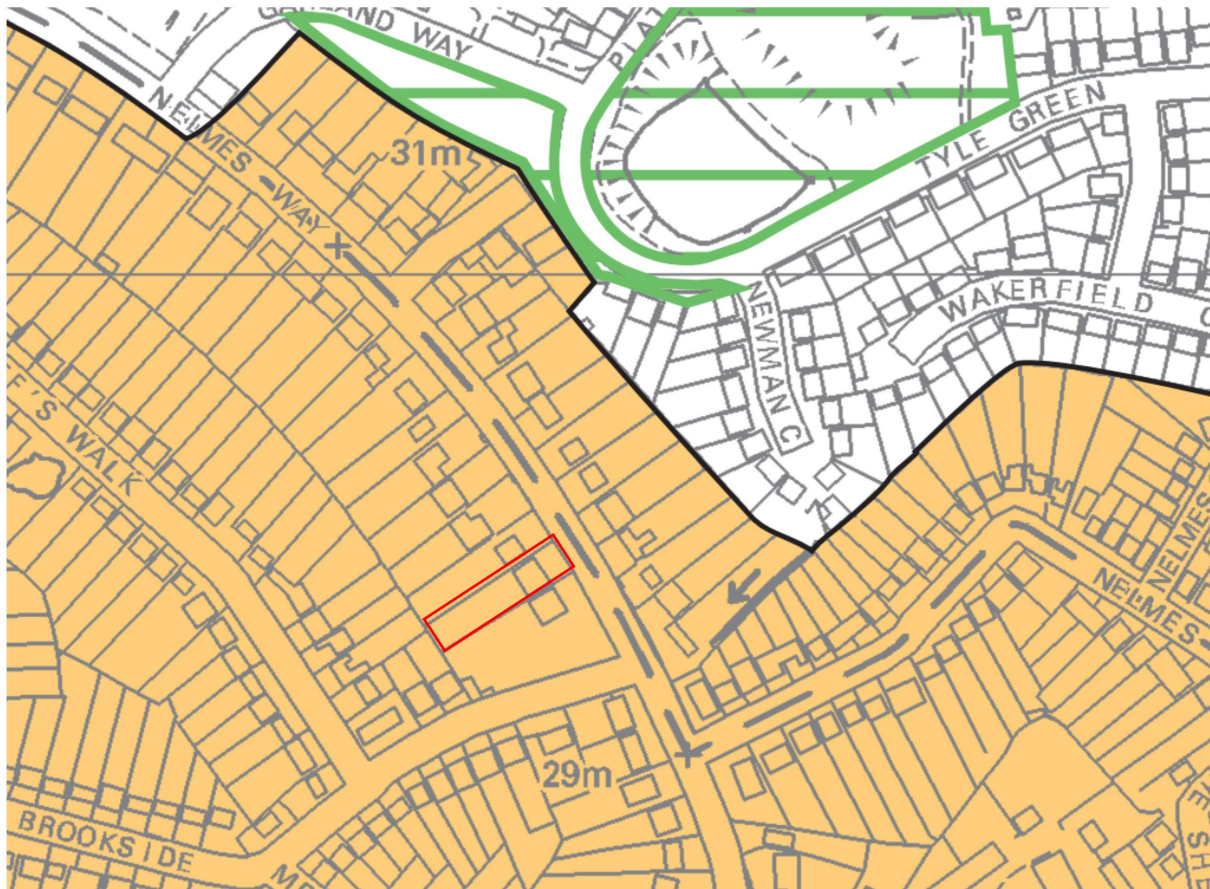


Figure 1: Site Location

1.2 The application site contains a single-family dwelling with a spacious rear garden. The detached dwelling was constructed in the 1960s and has not been altered since.

2. Planning History

2.1 A pre-application advice was sought for the initial proposal in February 2024 (Council's reference W0031.24)

Summary of Advice

In principle, a first floor side extension may be acceptable at this dwelling as long as the 1m spacing to the side boundary is maintained. I suggest that the side extension should not extend right up to the front of the existing side garage and be more balanced in depth similar to the front projection to the north of the house. An assessment should be made to ensure that the amenity of the neighbouring house at no.54 is not lost due to a deep extension well beyond their front building line; by bringing back the extension this issue would be resolved. I suggest that the front gables are kept low, similar to what is in place at present and that the large area of front glazing is removed to ensure a design that has more balanced fenestration in terms of window layouts.

With regards to the front dormer, it is acceptable in principle but please note that Section 8 of the Havering Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document states that;

'If the Council considers that a dormer facing the highway will not cause harm to the original house or street scene, its width should be no greater than 1.2 metres. The width should also not exceed the height (measured vertically between the highest and lowest points at which any part of the dormer intersects with the main roof). Where a larger window area is required on an elevation facing the highway, two smaller dormers with pitched roofs should be provided, suitably spaced apart, to minimise the apparent bulk of the additions. The combined width of a number of dormers on a roof facing the highway should not exceed half the width of the existing roof (measured at its mid-height).'

2.2 Regardless of the pre-app advice noted above, with a supporting planning statement and assessment of the proposal, the planning application for the proposed first-floor side extension and front dormer with alterations to the front elevation, including changes to fenestration was **approved** on 28th June 2024 (Council's reference P0624.24).



Picture 1. Application Site 52 Nelmes Way

3. Introduction

3.1 The main purpose of the proposal is to modernise and extend the current dwellinghouse **without** the need to **demolish and rebuild**, unlike many plots within the Emerson Park Character Area have undergone in recent years. Simply demolishing and rebuilding to get the same outcome (enlarged and modernised single-family dwelling) creates double the emissions as energy is used to deconstruct it and remove, process and dispose of the waste. Building a new replacement requires more materials and energy, creating more embodied carbon. Therefore, the proposal is a **far more sustainable way** to achieve what other plots have achieved within the Emerson Park Character Area.

3.2 The proposal for a first-floor side extension above the existing single-storey garage would provide two additional bedrooms to the dwellinghouse. The proposal also seeks alterations to the front elevation of the house, which include increasing the ridge height of the existing front gables, enlarging the glazed area to the front windows, introducing **two front dormer windows** and matching gable feature to the proposed first-floor side extension, creating a double fronted gable facade. The front dormers are proposed to create an architectural feature that reduces the bulk of the roof plane to the front and allows additional natural light to enter the landing. The proposal achieves a modernised appearance that has taken some architectural cues from other newly built dwellings in the Character Area, without being pastiche.

3.3 Whilst noting the guidance contained within the Havering Residential Extension and Alternations Supplementary Planning Document (2011), this guidance cannot be applied to the subject proposal mechanistically. This is because, as stated in the Local Plan, the Emerson Park Character Area *'has a distinctive character and is typified by large, well-maintained single-family detached dwellings set within spacious plots.'* Therefore, every dwellinghouse within the streets of the Area has its own design, character, appearance and architectural merit.

3.4 The principle of the Residential extension SPD is to ensure the integrity of the host dwelling, and any extensions are subordinate to the dwellinghouse. Furthermore, it is also to ensure that the character and appearance of the strong housing typology are not altered, which prevails within those streets. The application dwelling is not part of an established street scene with a strong housing typology.

3.5 This rationale has been applied by the case officer assessing the initial proposal (P0624.24) and in concluding to approve the extensions. Therefore, the proposal should be assessed against the relevant policies within the development plans and its own merits rather than mechanistically applying the perimeters as specified in the Residential Supplementary Planning Guidance.

4. Development Plans

4.1 The following are relevant Development Plan policies for the proposal:

London Plan 2021

- Policy D3 – Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- Policy D4 – Delivering good design
- Policy D6 – Housing quality and standards

Havering Local Plan 2021

- Policy 7 – Residential design and amenity
- Policy 26 – Urban design

4.2 The following are relevant guidance which apply to the proposal:

- Emerson Park Policy Area Supplementary Planning Document 2009
- Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011

5. Proposal

Design

5.1 The proposal is for a two-storey side extension with front façade alterations.

5.2. The proposal would result in the existing dwellinghouse being modernised, which would be in keeping with the street scene of Nelmes Way. The proposal would accord with the **policy D3** of the London Plan and **Policy 26** of the Local Plan, which seeks development to:

‘..enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness..’

‘..respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect..’

‘... be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan..’

‘..aim for high sustainability standards (with reference to the policies within London Plan Chapters 8 and 9) and take into account the principles of the circular economy..’

5.3 The proposal, through the introduction of front façade features, would also accord with the Havering **Local Plan Policy 26**, which seeks developments to:

‘...a high quality architectural quality..’

‘..respect and complement the distinctive qualities..’

‘.. respect, reinforce and complement the local street scene..’

‘..Respond to distinctive local building forms and patterns of development and respect the visual integrity and established scale, massing, rhythm of the building, frontages, group of buildings or the building line and height of the surrounding physical context...’

5.4 The main difference between the extant permission and the current proposal is the introduction of two front dormer windows instead of the approved one. There are no other changes to the consented scheme.

5.5 Following the approval, further design considerations were sought to better balance and align the openings of the front elevation with two dormers. These dormer windows are a design feature that breaks up the roof plane. They have been designed to be in proportion with the openings on the floors below and take cues from the gable end features. The proposed dormer windows rationalise

the front façade through symmetry and balance and, therefore, are a successful addition. The case officer noted and agreed to this in assessing the extant permission and stated,

'...It is acknowledged that the width of the front dormer window would be wider than normally preferable, however, it is considered that it would be contained well within the roof space and it is noted that there are various styles, sizes and designs of front dormer windows within the surrounding area and therefore no objections are raised.'

5.6 Therefore, the proposal does not create any visual harm to the street scene and the surrounding area in general but would add and contribute to the distinctiveness of the Emerson Park Character Area.

5.7 The proposed two double gable bays and two front dormer windows are typical within the street scene and are common features found in the newly built houses on Nelmes Way (see pictures 3 & 4). The proposal to introduce the double gable feature through the proposed side extension would allow the application site to give prominence, enhance its appearance, and reinforce whilst complementing the existing street scene.



Picture 3. Nelmes Way: Newly built dwelling with double front gable with two front dormers (with integral garage)



Picture 4. Nelmes Way: Symmetrical double-fronted gable ends with dormer windows

5.8 Whilst the proposed extensions are not strictly in accordance with the stipulations within the residential extension SPD, the proposed extension and the changes are a design response and have been accepted and approved in the extant permission, with the case officer noting,

'It would be difficult to refuse this planning application on the design, the impact on the main house and the street scene as the site is large enough to accommodate the extension, spacing of 1m to the side boundary would be maintained and the overall design is acceptable. Additionally, the area is characterised by houses with a range of designs, styles and building lines.

5.9 This reinforces the acceptance of the proposed modernisation of the current dwellinghouse within a designated special character area, which results in an overall visual improvement that contributes to the area.

5.10 The proposed overall design responds well within the context, and it should be remembered that a new modernised appearance of the dwellinghouse can be achieved without the need to demolish and rebuild. The SPD, in this instance, should not be mechanistically applied, and it should be recognised that the proposal meets the Local Plan Policies, which ensures that proposals positively respond to the local distinctiveness of the area.

Amenity

5.11 Regarding any amenity impact, the proposal would not have any negative impact on its neighbouring property at No 54 Nelmes Way, which would be the only affected neighbouring property.

5.12 Policy 7 of the Local Plan seeks to:

‘..protect the amenity of existing and future residents the Council will support developments that do not result in:

- i. Unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy or outlook;*
- ii. Unacceptable loss of daylight and sunlight; and*
- iii. Unacceptable levels of noise, vibration and disturbance.’*

5.13 The proposal will not result in unacceptable levels of amenity impacts to its neighbouring property at No 54 as it does not result in the proposal being extended beyond its current existing building line. With no other changes apart from the two front dormer windows from the extant permission, the proposal does not introduce any new amenity considerations. The case officer noted in their assessment of the extant permission, *‘.....that the development is considered to fall within the guidelines in the SPD for householder extensions and the proposal is not deemed to be unneighbourly’.*

5.14 The impact of the proposed extensions on the neighbouring amenities of No 54 Nelmes Way was assessed in the planning application P0624.24, and with relevant planning conditions reimposed to limit the opening of an en-suite window and no other flank wall windows could be added again, no further impact arises from the amended proposal to include one additional front dormer window.

6. conclusion

6.1 The proposal is a design-led solution to modernise and enlarge the existing dwellinghouse without the need to demolish and rebuild. The proposal meets all planning policies with respect to design and amenities and, therefore, should be supported.

Appendix 1 - Photo



Rear elevation