

Mohammed Ahmed

From: Pierre Georget
Sent: 27 June 2024 16:42
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Application - 2023/1925/P - Objection - FAO Blythe Smith

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Dear Ms Smith,

We hope it is not too late to comment on this proposal at no.3 Lawford Road.

We are very concerned that the proposed developments at no.3 will inevitably have a significant impact on our own property given their extremely close proximity and position in relation to us, and that that impact is not reasonable or proportionate against what is being gained by these developments.

Our main concerns are:

- Significantly reduced light into our own ground floor toilet. The side development will mean doubling the height of the wall which stands only about 1 metre away from our toilet window and extending back along into our garden. Together with the vertical rear extension, a room which already suffers with poor light due to the 2011 extension at no.3 would effectively be cut off from natural light completely. The application states that the side extension is solely intended for a more convenient ground floor toilet. We don't think it is reasonable that we should cut off any remaining light into our ground floor toilet, not to mention being adversely affected in all the other ways below, only so no.3 can essentially move their own ground floor toilet to a more "convenient" position.
- Reduced light to our kitchen. Our kitchen is located in our single storey extension on the other side to no.3 and our only kitchen window directly faces the location of the proposed development. Not only will the addition to the 2nd storey remove about half our view of the sky from the window, our view opposite will be a high brick wall. A kitchen which currently already has issues with natural light given the layout and existing extension at no.3 from 2011/12 will be even darker.
- Reduced light into our first and second floor rear windows. We have an original short two storey extension which already suffers with reduced light on the ground and 1st floors from the no.3 side since they extended back much further than us in 2011/12. Our 2nd floor window is above our extension and will be directly next to the proposed vertical addition to the rear extension at no.3, making it extremely visible from that window and affecting our light into our 2nd floor.
- Increased sense of enclosure. In combination, the two proposed extensions will represent a huge inroad onto our sense of space and our enjoyment of both our house and garden, which we have spent decades maintaining.

- Build concerns. This is a fairly major development taking place on our party wall, only about a metre away from our property given the narrowness of the gap between us. Work on the wall and foundations will require major digging work and so we have obvious concerns about damage to our own property, which is a real risk given the proximity and the age of the property, not to mention the inconvenience of major works to the party wall.

In summary, we do not think it is proportionate for us to have to face all of these issues simply to allow no.3 to have (a) a more convenient ground floor toilet and (b) a relatively small extra play room for their children when they have already been permitted to extend back further than anyone else in the vicinity.

Even if these concerns may not all seem hugely important to the outsider, for what it is worth they are all particularly sensitive to us because my late husband passed away last year and I am also recovering from a major stroke in 2022. We have lived in this house for 41 years and are very keen to keep everything as far as possible the way it was when he was alive, and it greatly helps with my recovery to keep the house and particularly the garden as we always maintained and remembered it.

In addition, more generally, we also want to make sure a few of the finer details of the claims in this application are properly scrutinised because we think the professionally drafted Design and Access Statement is misleading in its reliance on supposed local "precedents" to suggest that these proposed developments (both no.1 and 3) are consistent and in keeping with the local area.

We don't agree that there is any strong relevant precedent nearby for either the side extension or the 2nd storey extension being proposed. The primary precedent being relied upon is obviously no.13/15 Lawford Road – that is essentially the direct blueprint for this current proposal. However, although it is not flagged up in the application, we are fairly sure that the rear extensions at 13/15 (and no 19) were themselves unauthorised developments put up in the 1980s which never should or would have been permitted under planning rules. We cannot find any record of planning approval every being granted for any of those 3 full height extensions and would invite the decision maker to examine the history there.

In any case even if we are wrong about that, aside from those 3 there are no other similar properties in the entire block up of around 40 houses to Patshull place (south side of Lawford Road / north side of Patshull Road / east side of Bartholomew Villas / west side of Patshull Place) which have a full height rear extension as proposed here.

We think it is frankly misleading not to make all this crystal clear in the application, instead including references to houses in the next block up and on the opposite side of Patshull road, as well as including higher houses with a raised ground floor, to paint a picture that there is "a notable amount of local precedence" for this present proposal. In short, there is not. There are only three relevant precedents for this proposal, none of which are particularly close, and they are all developments which were completed in breach of planning rules and should never have been allowed in the first place. I appreciate they are professionals being paid to make an attractive proposal but they should also be open and honest with the planning officer about this instead of relying on other supposed "precedents" which are not even in eyeshot of this particular location and are irrelevant.

Lastly, we think that the proposed zinc finish on the 2nd storey rear extension would be an eyesore and would not be remotely in keeping with the architectural design and the local area. We understand the design difficulty is that the weight of brickwork will not be supported by the existing foundations to the extension, but visually this proposed solution is frankly similar to plonking a dark grey industrial water tank on top of the extension roof. The only reason a similar idea at no.15 was ever authorised was because it was actually a considerable improvement on the hideous old dilapidated copper finish previously there (which, again, should never have been there because it was an unauthorised development in the first place). This is an entirely different situation where the applicant is not improving an existing extension which has become an eyesore but is seeking to justify adding an entirely new one where there is presently none.

We thank you for your time and consideration and hope our concerns will be taken into account prior to any decision.

Julia Georget and Pierre Georget, residents of no.5 Lawford Road.

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