

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by Alexander Walker MPlan MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/16/3156626
7A Woolwich Road, Greenwich SE10 0RA

- 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 Hitesh Patel against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 15/3738/F, dated 23 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 25 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is a multi storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. There appears to be a discrepancy in the drawings submitted with the appeal. The proposed rear elevation appears to indicate that the extension above the shop extension would be a single-storey. However, the proposed left and right side elevations indicate that it would be two-storeys, terminating at eaves height, and the proposed floor plans include both an extension to the first and second floors. Accordingly, I have determined the appeal on the basis of it being a three-storey, including shop extension, plus basement extension.
3. At the time of my visit a wall built up to damp proof course level had been constructed in the approximate position of the proposal.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring properties, with regard to light, privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal property is a three-storey plus basement, mid-terrace building. The properties within the terrace row are similar in size and design, with the exception of a modern development on the eastern end on the corner of Woolwich Road and Hatcliffe Street. The ground floors are generally occupied by retail and commercial units with the upper floors being residential. Although the rear elevation of the original terrace properties has had some alterations in
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terms of window detailing, its form appears to have remained largely unaltered.

6. The area is characterised by the wide variety of building designs and sizes and mix of residential, retail and commercial uses that create a tight form of urban development.
7. Both parties refer to an application for a single storey rear extension and basement enlargement¹. However, the details of the application have not been presented before me. The proposed extension would create a two-storey extension to the rear of the first floor flat above a single-storey and basement extension to the rear of the ground floor shop.
8. As a result of its height and its footprint occupying almost the full extent of the rear amenity space of the property, the extension would introduce an incongruous feature to the rear elevation of the terraced row. The extension would appear excessively bulky and would unacceptably dominate the rear elevation and would fail to appear subservient to the host building. Overall, the extension would represent an over-dominant, out of scale incongruous feature that would fail to respect the character and appearance of the rear elevation of the terraced row.
9. I acknowledge that part of the recent development on the eastern end of the terrace projects out to the rear approximately the same distance as the proposal. However, the culmination of the recent development on one side and the extension on the other would result in the adjoining property, No 9 Woolwich Road being dominated and appearing hemmed in.
10. At the time of my visit the building to the rear of the site had been demolished, enabling views of the site off Blackwall Lane, albeit the views were partially screened by security fencing. I note the appellant's reference to planning permission for multi-storey flats on this site. Notwithstanding the likely limited public views of the proposal in the future, this does not negate the harm I have identified above. The extension would still be visible from the private amenity areas to the rear of the terraced properties and some views of it would likely still be possible from Blackwall Lane.
11. I find therefore that the extension would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (CS) 2014, which, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design and that rear extensions should be limited to a scale and design appropriate to the building and locality. In addition, it would fail to follow the advice set out in the Council's Advice Note 2 – Planning Guidance for home Extensions 2014, which states that extensions should not overpower the main building. Furthermore, it would be contrary to Policy 7.4 of the London Plan 2015, which, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure that development has regard to the pattern of existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass.

Living Conditions

12. The side elevations of the extension would be within proximity of upper floor windows on the adjoining properties. As a result of the depth and height of the

¹ LPA Ref 15/37358/F

extension, it would have a significant adverse effect on the outlook from these windows. This would be significantly harmful to the occupants above No 9 Woolwich Road as the outlook from the rear elevation is already restricted by the recent development to the east. The proposed extension would further exacerbate this effect by creating a sense of enclosure that would adversely affect the usability of the rooms that these windows serve, to the detriment of the occupants.

13. In addition, the extension would significantly reduce the amount of light entering the neighbouring windows, again, which is already limited at No 9 due to the recent development to the east. As a result of the orientation of the extension, being to the west of No 9, this would result in very little direct sunlight entering its windows on the rear elevation. In addition, due to the relative narrow width of No 9 and the depth of the extension, the level of natural light would also be significantly reduced.
14. I acknowledge the Council's concern with regard to the effect of the extension on the privacy of the occupants of the neighbouring property. However, there would be no windows in the side elevations and as a result there would not be any overlooking issues. Nevertheless, this does not lessen the harm I have identified above with regard to the adverse effect on outlook and light.
15. I find therefore that the extension would significantly harm the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring properties with regard to loss of light and outlook. As such, it would be contrary to Policy DH(b) of the CS, which seeks to ensure that development does not cause unacceptable loss of amenity to adjacent occupiers by reducing the amount of daylight and sunlight or result in an unneighbourly sense of enclosure.

Other Matters

16. I have regard to the appellant's argument that the proposal would provide an increase in the overall floor area for the flat and therefore provide an improved standard of accommodation. However, this would not outweigh the harm it would have on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupants of the adjoining properties.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Alexander Walker

INSPECTOR