
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2017

by A A Phillips BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/16/3164900

25 Beaconsfield Road, Blackheath, London SE3 7LN

- 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 Mrs Claire Nord against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 16/2655/F, dated 15 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey extension of the first floor rear over an existing ground floor single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Westcombe Park conservation area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a two storey detached property located in a mainly residential part of Blackheath. The property has an existing single storey extension to the rear, as do some other nearby residential properties. The property is adjacent to a four storey block of flats and there is a range of different styles and ages of residential properties in the area. It is part of a high quality attractive residential environment, including mainly large semi-detached and detached properties.
 4. The proposed first floor rear extension would include two flat roof areas and would substantially increase the height of the rear of the property by more than two metres. It would add considerable bulk and mass to the property and would dominate its rear. As a consequence of the proposed roof form and overall scale it would be at odds with the host property, failing to respect or appreciate its existing form and would therefore comprise an incongruous addition.
 5. Although the extension would be to the rear of the property and not at all in a prominent location it would nonetheless represent poor design and would be of a scale and design inappropriate to the building and the locality more generally, failing to take account of the established layout and special character
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of the conservation area in which it would be situated. Consequently, it would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

6. Given the scale of the proposal within the context of the conservation area as a whole, I consider that it would cause less than substantial harm to its character and appearance. In accordance with paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I must weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal.
7. The appellant has not demonstrated specific benefits that may arise from the development. Although there may be some small economic and social benefits associated with construction activity and the provision of an extended dwelling, these do not, in my judgment, outweigh the harm that I have found.
8. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Westcombe Park conservation area. As such it would conflict with the design and heritage provisions of Policies 7.4 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2016, Policies DH (h), DH1 and DH3 of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy and Detailed Policies July 2014 and the Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document July 2016 and the Framework. Together, these seek to ensure that development respects local character, achieves high design quality, preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas and heritage assets and achieves high standards of architecture.

Other matters

9. I am aware of the objection of a neighbour with particular regard to the effect of the development on living conditions with particular regard to outlook and sense of enclosure. However, this matter has not been determinative in this case.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and taking into account other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alastair Phillips

INSPECTOR