
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2017

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 14 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/W/16/3161392
2 and 3 Railway Rise, London SE22 8EE

- 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 St Aidans Developments against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref 16/AP/1341, dated 5 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a three storey rear extension to Nos 2 – 3 Railway Rise.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises Nos 2 and 3 Railway Rise which, along with No 1 Railway Rise, form a short terrace of 3 dwellings dating from the Victorian era. No 1 sits closer to the junction of the roads with Grove Vale and all 3 properties have frontages onto Railway Rise and Melbourne Grove. Although they have been the subject of some alterations, the properties display some detailed design elements and have a composition which, overall, adds to the area.
4. The proposal would extend the rear of Nos 2 and 3 towards Melbourne Grove. The extension would be of 3 storeys with a flat roof and a rear mansard, and according to the Council's figures, would have a depth of 4.4m beyond the main first floor rear wall of the properties. The effect from Railway Rise would be to introduce a narrow extension to the side of No 3 which would be set back considerably from the frontage here. However, some view of the side of the proposed rear extension would be possible.
5. From Melbourne Grove, the proposal would appear as a significant extension to the terrace. The views from the south would include the expanse of the new flank wall and the flat roof would be an obvious feature. The current subservience of Nos 2 and 3 to the more dominant No 1 would be lost here because the current set-back of Nos 2 and 3 would be lost and the extension would project beyond the main wall of No 1.

6. The overall design would have a top-heavy appearance as a result of the flat roof and the rear mansard. I consider that this would be visually awkward and would appear over-dominant and would detract from the street-scene here. The large areas of glazing and the small feature-balconies would serve to make the proposed extension more obvious.
7. I have taken account of the other buildings in the area and the development under construction on the opposite side of Railway Rise. Whilst there is a variety of buildings, mainly of 2 and 3 stories, in the area, I consider that the particular effects of the proposal, especially when seen from Melbourne Grove, would mean that it would have an unacceptable effect on the area.
8. The appellant points out that the proposed height of the extension is no greater than the existing building. Whilst this is the case, it is the combination of the depth, width, top-heavy design and the mass of the extension that is unacceptable in my judgement. I have also taken account of the rear boundary treatment on Melbourne Grove, and the fact that the proposal would improve this aspect of the site. However, I do not consider that this outweighs the harm that I have identified.

Other Matters

9. The Council considers that the appeal site represents a '*non-designated heritage asset*' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework; I note, in addition, that the Inspector who determined the previous appeal (Ref: APP/A5840/W/15/3135088) considered this to be the case. Additional evidence has been submitted by the appellants who conclude that the appeal site and its building have a negligible heritage significance which is insufficient to make them non-designated heritage assets.
10. My judgement has been based on the effects of the proposed extension on the street-scene generally and in this context I have found it to be unacceptable. I consider that the additional evidence submitted by the appellant must draw substantial doubt on the status of the building as a heritage asset and in that context I have not considered this matter in this appeal any further.

Conclusions

11. For the reasons set out above, I consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the street-scene and the area generally and this is not outweighed by any other matters. This would be contrary to Policies 3.12 and 3.13 of the Southwark Plan. As a consequence, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR