

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by C J Ford BA (Hons) BTP Dist. MRTPI

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 12 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/17/3171420

36 Thaxted Road, New Eltham, London SE9 3PT

- 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 William Clifford against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 16/3147/F, dated 23 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is extend kitchen/diner area within Permitted Development scope with new window to rear. Convert garage to habitable space (bedroom) with window to front. Extend front of new habitable space to line of existing bay window, retaining front door and porch status. Install new ground floor WC and utility room in new kitchen/diner area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear infill extension and single storey front extension at 36 Thaxted Road, New Eltham, London SE9 3PT in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/3147/F, dated 23 September 2016 and the plans submitted with it.

Procedural matter

2. The description in the header above is taken from the original application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of the development has changed to 'Retrospective planning permission for a single storey rear infill extension and single storey front extension'. The revised description of the development has been agreed by the parties.
3. In the formal decision the revised description has therefore been used but 'Retrospective planning permission' has been omitted because it is not an act of development. At the time of the site visit the development had been completed.

Main issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two storey bay fronted semi-detached house located on the south side of Thaxted Road. This part of Thaxted Road, north and south, predominantly comprises of similar semi-detached houses.

6. The majority of the semi-detached houses have adjoining single storey garages but there are distinct differences between the north and south side of the street in terms of the appearance and siting of the garages. On the north side they have simple lean to roofs and the doors generally align with the main front wall of the house. The sense of uniformity is reinforced by the strong building line whereby neighbouring garages are in broad alignment.
7. On the south side the garages have a variety of roof forms and there isn't a strong building line because Nos 42 and 44 are set back. The front of the garages to Nos 40 and 46 therefore project forward of the neighbouring garages at Nos 42 and 44. As a consequence, parts of the flank walls are visible in the street scene.
8. The single storey front extension at the appeal property means that what used to be the garage, now habitable space, is in alignment with the front bay. As a result, it projects forward of the garage at No 38 and part of the flank wall is visible. However, this relationship does not appear incongruous because, as described above, there are similar occurrences on this side of the street.
9. Likewise, the alignment with the bay is not out of place on this side of Thaxted Road because it already occurs in relation to the garages at Nos 42 and 44 and part of the medical centre at No 52. The appellant has also drawn attention to a recent planning permission at No 46, (Council Ref: 16/2590/F). This similarly incorporates a front extension that would be in alignment with the bay.
10. The submitted plans and supporting photograph indicate the garage at the appeal property had a hipped roof. A hipped roof element is replicated at the front of the development with a lower flat roof adopted at the rear. Again, this does not appear out of place due to the variety of roof forms found to the side of the semi-detached houses on this side of the street. It is noted the permission at No 46 also proposes a comparable roof.
11. It is acknowledged the development does not fully comply with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Residential Extensions, Conversions and Basements' 2016 (SPD). Notably this is because the SPD specifies extensions should normally be set back slightly from the front wall of the house to allow the original house to remain prominent. Nevertheless, the SPD is guidance and has to be applied having regard to the context of the site.
12. In its specific context, the appeal development does not appear inharmonious or unsympathetic. Accordingly, it does not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. It therefore does not conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016, Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Council's Core Strategy with Detailed Policies 2014, or the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, it is concluded that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted. The Council has ticked Sections 11a, b and c in the questionnaire indicating that the three standard conditions should be imposed. However, these conditions are unnecessary because the development has been completed.

C J Ford APPOINTED PERSON