

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2017

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 06 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/17/3171755

30 Parkgate, London, SE3 9XF

- 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 Paul Simcock against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 16/3580/F, dated 25 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a single storey rear and first floor side extension and formation of a loft conversion comprising three dormer windows, with the insertion of two rooflights to front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more precise than the application form; I note the Appellant also uses this description on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a 1930's detached hipped roof dwelling of pleasing appearance and proportions on a generous plot lying in an area of established residential character. The locality is primarily formed from a variety of detached homes generally with good quality detailing and sizeable gardens all coming together to make a very agreeable streetscene and an air of spaciousness. The proposal is as described above.
 5. The site lies within the Blackheath Park Conservation Area. There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This is reflected within Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (LP) and Policies DH(h) and DH3 of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) (CS)
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6. The first floor side extension would lie a little behind the front of the projecting single storey attached side garage but with its main elevation on a plane with the principal front wall of the property, a bay window projecting albeit to a lesser degree than the existing bay feature, and a hipped roof form with a ridge height and pitched surfaces continuing from the dwelling. Whilst in some cases the argument can be made for subordination to the original property being unnecessary I would not count this as an applicable instance. The existing front façade is locally characteristic, attractive and suitably scaled for the plot and the wider environs and in my opinion should be allowed to continue to prevail in visual terms. Furthermore the majority of homes locally do not run close to side boundaries with two storey elements on both flanks. There tends to be a pattern of single storey on one plot close to two storey at the neighbouring home and this contributes to character and pleasant spaciousness. The appeal scheme would represent overdevelopment in this regard.
7. Regrettably the shape, scale and high level positioning of the dormers would also let the proposal down in my opinion. The trio of dormers would be an ungainly combination and create a 'top heavy' dwelling seen in the context of the fenestration below and the building as a whole. I recognise that the dormers would not be open to public view but nevertheless good design should be embodied in all development and particularly so in a Conservation Area. Furthermore, views from nearby properties would be available. The roof alteration scheme would be unduly awkward in visual terms and lack the subtlety which would be appropriate for this property and this locality.
8. Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the LP and Policies DH1, DH3 and DH(a) of the CS have relevance to the case. Taken together, and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that development is of high quality design, sympathetic to its surroundings and integrating in the streetscene, subordinate to the host property, suitable in form for its context, and protective of visual amenity. This is reflected in the advice and objectives of the Council's Residential Extensions, Conversions and Basements Supplementary Planning Document (July 2016) (SPD) albeit that document cannot be expected to cover every eventuality. Given the nature of the scheme I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these relevant development plan policies and the pertinent aims of the SPD. It would also run contrary to the aims of S72(1) of the Act along with LP Policy 7.8 and CS Policies DH(h) and DH3.

Other matters

9. I sympathise with the wish of the Appellant to increase internal space. I can see that there would be no harm to the residential amenity of neighbours and note that no objections have arisen in that regard. I recognise that there are other examples of side and roof extensions erected locally albeit I do not know the full planning background or timescale of these. I would conclude that some work successfully in visual terms, others less so and do not contribute positively to the scene. In any event, for reasons of position, scale or form none are directly comparable to the appeal scheme which I must assess on its own merits. Whilst the contribution of trees locally is indeed underlined in the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal that document also refers to the quality of dwellings and their disposition and detailing along Parkgate. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not

outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.

10. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) have been considered. Key objectives of the Framework are to protect and enhance the qualities of the natural and built environment as well as to safeguard heritage assets; development plan policies which I cite mirror these. The Framework underlines that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. The appeal proposal which I shall not allow would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset however what public benefits there would be, such as construction employment, would not outweigh this harm. Furthermore there are no other benefits, including to the Appellant, which to my mind would be of a scale to outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area which I have identified.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR