

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/17/3174318
284 Broad Walk, London, SE3 8NH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr M Moran against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 17/0379/V, dated 2 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2017.
 - The application sought planning permission for construction of a 2-storey side extension, single storey rear extension and loft conversion comprising gable end and rear dormer window without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 16/2438/F, dated 9 January 2017.
 - The condition in dispute is No 2 which states that: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: BW01 (Rev 3), BW02 (Rev 3) and Planning, Design & Access Statement.
 - The reason given for the condition is: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved plans and to ensure compliance with Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2016), Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan; Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) and Residential Extensions, Conservations and Basement SPD.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Appellant is seeking a variation to the approved scheme via the use of revised plans from that approved in planning permission Ref 16/2438/F, dated 9 January 2017. The Appellant would wish to change to drawings BW01 (Rev.1) & BW02 (Rev.1). As the Appellant puts it in the appeal statement (para 1.2), this amendment would change the two permitted small dormers on the rear elevation to a large single dormer. I should add that two dormers were clearly permitted within planning permission Ref 16/2438/F although the then description of development inaccurately refers to a dormer in the singular; this would appear to stem from changes made to the proposal during the determination period of that application.

Main Issue

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

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling undergoing extension and alteration works at the time of my visit. The dwelling has pleasing elevations and whilst they are relatively extensive the approved works will retain the external aesthetic merit of the property. The wider established residential area is characterised by a range of generally semi-detached and terraced dwellings of broadly similar character and scale which come together to form an agreeable suburban scene with a mix of hipped and gabled roofs contributing positively to the visual ambience. As noted above, the appeal property has permission for two dormers; these are of pitched roof design. The scheme would propose to erect a single dormer across the majority of the rear roof area with this dormer to have a small pitched hipped upstand and the majority of its roof as flat behind this.
5. Regrettably the proposed amended works would unduly lead to a sense of an unduly 'top heavy' rear elevation with a gain in bulk and obliteration of almost all the rear pitch of the roof of this home. The dominance of this large box-like dormer would be excessive and I would class this as representing poor design. Whilst not visible from the immediate street frontage there would be some sighting available from the part of Broad Walk which is 'round the corner' to the north west. Even though it would not be widely open to public view there is not justification for endorsing something so visually ungainly and patently out of character with the original or extended host property and its surrounds. Furthermore it would be visible from nearby garden spaces and in this suburban setting the appearance of rear elevations should not be ignored or their importance down-played.
6. Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016) and Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014), taken together and amongst other matters, call for a suitably scaled high quality design of development sympathetic to a site's wider setting and seek to ensure protection of local distinctiveness and character generally along with the aesthetics of the host property. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these policies, which also align with the objectives of the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance SPD (July 2016).

Other matters

7. I understand the wish of the Appellant to increase internal space in the loft area. I note that there were no objections from neighbours. The scheme would not be unduly harmful to residential amenity. I recognise that there are some examples of large dormers to be found locally, I do not know their planning history, but these do not set a precedent nor should they be used as a benchmark when planning policies seek good quality design. In any event I must determine this case on its own merits. I note the Appellant's reference to 'permitted development' rights but I have an appeal before me to determine. In terms of this appeal there is a judgement to be made on the scheme and I could not condone such poor design. 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.

8. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

9. 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