
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2017

by Caroline Mulloy BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 13 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/W/17/3173260
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/4028, dated 29 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is extensions at ground and first floor to rear elevation and construction of dormer windows to rear facing roof slope to nos 2-3 Railway Rise.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, terrace and surrounding 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 three traditional dwellings. All three properties have frontages onto Railway Rise and Melbourne Grove. Although there have been some alterations, the properties retain many of their traditional features and thus contribute to the character and appearance of the area.
 4. Number 1 Railway Rise has a two storey outrigger with a pitched roof. The rear elevations of Nos 2 and 3 are set back thus appearing subservient to the more dominant No 1. The proposal would extend the full width of both properties at ground floor level, reducing in width at first and second floor level. Even taking into account the reduction in width at upper levels, the proposal would be of a significant mass and bulk which would fail to appear subservient to the host property. In addition, the original plan form of the host property would be lost.
 5. Furthermore, it would extend approximately 2.25m forwards of the rear elevation at 1 Railway Rise. Consequently, Nos 2 and 3 would no longer appear subservient to No 1 and the existing architectural hierarchy of the terrace would be lost.
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6. In addition, the proposed dormer would occupy more than 20% of the existing rear roof slope, would be wider than it is high and would not be set down from the ridge of the roof. Consequently, it would dominate the rear elevation and appear as an incongruous addition in direct conflict with the Council's Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
7. Views of the proposal from Railway Rise would be restricted to an extent by the boundary wall of the adjacent health centre. However, the proposal would be highly visible from Melbourne Grove and the substantial flank wall and dormer would be particularly visible from the south. Taking these factors in combination, I consider that the proposal would fail to be subservient to the host property and would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. I agree that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the front elevation of the appeal properties. Nevertheless, the less ordered rear elevation provides contrast to the more formal and detailed front elevation and thus forms an important element in the architectural hierarchy of the properties and terrace.
9. The appellant considers that the proposal would overcome the concerns of the Inspector in relation to a previous proposal which was dismissed at appeal¹ on 14 February 2017. The flat roof and mansard roof have been replaced with a pitched roof over a traditional style outrigger. Nevertheless, for the reasons stated the proposal would be of a substantial mass and bulk extending beyond the rear elevation of No 1. It would, therefore, still appear as a substantial extension to the terrace and result in the loss of subservience to No 1. Furthermore, the significant dormer would dominate the rear roof slope and appear as an incongruous addition.
10. Although the character of the area is mixed, this does not justify the harm which I have identified to character and appearance in the specific circumstances of this case. Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of the existing rear extensions, I note that their visibility from Melbourne Grove is limited in contrast to the appeal proposal.
11. Attention is drawn to other rear extensions in the area, although no details are provided. However, as the Council point out many of these cases appear to relate to semi-detached properties with original two storey outriggers and are not, therefore, directly comparable to the appeal proposal which limits the weight which I can attach to them in my Decision.
12. The proposal would provide increased living accommodation for the occupiers of the appeal properties in an accessible location. However, these benefits would be significantly outweighed by the harm which I have identified.
13. For the reasons stated, I conclude that the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property, terrace and surrounding area. It would, therefore, be contrary to Policies 3.12 and 3.13 of The Southwark Plan (2007), Strategic Policy 12 of the Council's Core Strategy (2011), Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2016 which collectively seek to secure high quality urban design and architecture which reflects local character. Conflict also arises with Paragraphs 17 and 56 of the National

¹ Appeal reference APP/A5840/W/16/3161392

Planning Policy Framework which seek to secure high quality design which contributes positively to making places better for people. There is also conflict with the SPD.

Other matters

14. A Heritage Assessment (2016) submitted by the appellant concludes that the appeal properties have negligible heritage significance which is insufficient to make them non-designated heritage assets. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, I have no reason to doubt this conclusion. However, my judgment has been based on the effects of the proposal on the host property, terrace and surrounding area and I have found the effects to be unacceptable.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons stated, and taking all other considerations into account, the appeal should be dismissed.

Caroline Mulloy

Inspector