
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July, 2017

by S. J. Buckingham, BA (Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI FSA

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

Decision date: 28th July, 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/W/17/3171863

Flat 4, 196 Peckham Rye, London, SE22 9QA

- 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 Mrs Madeline Leek against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref: 16/AP/1914 dated 10 May, 2016 was refused by notice dated 23 September, 2016.
 - The development proposed is single storey roof extension to 4 floor converted house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for rooftop extension to provide an enlarged three bedroom 3rd/4th floor flat and provision of a roof terrace with associated balustrade at Flat 4, 196 Peckham Rye, London, SE22 9QA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 16/AP/1914 dated 10 May, 2016 subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: EX(00)001 a and AL(00)001 b.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However this was changed with the agreement of the parties. The Council dealt with the proposal on the basis of the description given above in my decision, and so have I.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of The Gardens Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is the fourth floor flat and rooftop of a four-storey, traditional terraced townhouse located in the Gardens Conservation Area, and facing the extensive green space of Peckham Rye.
 5. Extracts from the relevant conservation area appraisal have been put before me, which, with the evidence on the ground confirm that the area has a
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generally consistent character created by its imposing, nineteenth century villas, typically of yellow London stock brick with stucco and red brick dressings, and with low-pitched, hipped slated roofs. Many are now converted to flats.

6. The appeal building is of red brick and flat-roofed, with a heavily corniced parapet line, and is therefore an unusual insertion into the townscape. Nonetheless it is of an appropriate scale and attractive design and thereby makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Being identified alongside the adjoining Clock Public House as a "Key Unlisted Building" in the area, it can also be considered as an undesignated heritage asset in its own right, as well as part of the designated heritage asset.
7. The appeal proposal is for the creation of a rooftop extension to enlarge the fourth floor flat. It would span the full width of the existing flat roof and be set back from the front elevation by just under half of the depth of the roof, with that area remaining as outdoor amenity space. The extension would sit flush with the rear and flank elevations of the building, and have full height glazing to the front and rear, in a relatively slender steel frame, with stainless steel shingles to the flanks.
8. The noticeable consistency of roof forms is an important element in the character of the conservation area, and it is understandable that the Council would wish to protect the area from loss of character caused by roof extensions and alterations. However, the appeal proposal would not entail the loss of a typical roof form. The roof of the host building currently features a shed-like stair overrun with a pitched roof and plastic weatherboard-style cladding, and a trellised timber fence around its margin, both of which have an incongruous appearance at roof level. These are currently visible in long views across Peckham Rye and obliquely from the street.
9. The proposed roof extension would also be visible from these vantage points, but would have a deep set back from the front elevation, behind the strong parapet line, a lower height than the pitched roofs to buildings on either side and a simple, clean cut design. The proposal would also include replacement of the timber fencing behind the roof parapet with frameless glazing. It does not therefore appear to me that the development would be particularly prominent in relation to the host building or in views through or into the Conservation Area, nor that it would be more harmful than the features currently visible on the roof.
10. The design, including use of stainless steel shingles, is unashamedly modern. The Planning Practice Guidance is clear that, provided there is no harm to a designated heritage asset, innovative design should not be discouraged. Although the shingles have the potential to draw attention to themselves due to their reflective appearance, the flanks of the proposed extension would be largely screened from important views by flanking roofs and mature street and garden trees around the appeal building. Consequently, I conclude that they would be glimpsed as a modern addition within the conservation area, but would not be unduly conspicuous in views within the area, and would not as a result be harmful to its character or appearance.

11. I conclude therefore that the proposed roof extension would not be overly dominant in respect of the host building and, although visible in views within the conservation area, would not form a conspicuous or particularly harmful element of these views. It would not as a result harm the designated or undesignated heritage asset, and would not conflict with policy 3.16 of the Southwark Plan 2007, which expects new developments to respect the context of the conservation area; nor with policy 12 of the Southwark Core Strategy 2011, which expects development to conserve or enhance the significance of Southwark's heritage assets; nor with policy 7.8 of the London Plan which seeks development which conserves the significance of heritage assets.

Conditions

12. The Council has been given an opportunity to put forward conditions, but has not done so. In the interests of clarity, I have imposed a condition requiring implementation of the proposal in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above therefore, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

S J Buckingham

INSPECTOR