
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2017

by Matthew Birkinshaw BA(Hons) Msc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/17/3175296

61 Knebworth Avenue, Walthamstow, E17 5AH

- 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 Saving Energy Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application Ref 170707, dated 23 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is external wall insulation to the front and back elevations, 90mm EPS system to be applied to external walls and finished in a silicon render finish. Off white in colour.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The planning application was submitted by the Family Mosaic Housing Association. However, the Housing Association has authorised "Saving Energy Ltd" to pursue the appeal on their behalf. I have therefore referred to Saving Energy Ltd as the appellant in the header above.
3. The appeal is made against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the application of external wall insulation to the front and rear elevations. The same proposals have been submitted by the appellant at several other properties throughout the London Borough of Waltham Forest, which are also before me.¹ This includes a proposal on the same street at no.3. Despite the similarities I have determined each case on its own merits, and each appeal is subject to a separate decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene within Knebworth Avenue.

Reasons

5. The appeal property forms part of a row of 2-storey red-brick terraced houses. At ground and first floor level it has projecting bay windows with a distinctive, triangular window above the front door. With the exception of small alterations such as porches, the same style and design is replicated throughout Knebworth

¹ APP/U5930/W/17/3175295, APP/U5930/W/17/3175297, APP/U5930/W/17/3175298, APP/U5930/W/17/3175302, APP/U5930/W/17/3175303, APP/U5930/W/17/3176020, APP/U5930/W/17/3176030, APP/U5930/W/17/3176033

Avenue. This has created a broadly consistent appearance which is a part of the locally distinctive, suburban character of the street.

6. By applying silicon render to the front elevation the original brickwork of the host property would be lost. Compared to the render used on the bay windows it would also project forward from the front elevation by approximately 90mm. In a row of adjoining houses with similar characteristics it would be a very noticeable addition. For these reasons I consider that the external wall insulation would be a stark, functional and unsympathetic addition to the host property. When viewed in the context of its terraced surroundings the protruding render would be an incongruous form of development that would detract from the suburban streetscene within Knebworth Avenue.
7. At appeal the appellant has suggested that a 'brick-slip' process could be used instead of render. It is claimed that the finish would look identical to a brick-built house. However, a range of only 6 colours have been provided, none of which appear to accurately reflect the original brickwork of the host property. I am therefore persuaded that the materials would be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing house. In the event that an accurate match could be found, this would not overcome the incongruous appearance of insulation protruding beyond the front elevation of the terrace.
8. I have also taken into account that a similar scheme of external wall insulation is proposed at 3 Knebworth Avenue.² But no.3 is at the other end of the street to the appeal property. Thus, even if a similar product was used on both properties, they would not be viewed in the same context as one another.
9. Finally, it is appreciated that the scheme would benefit existing and potential future occupants from the increased thermal performance of the house. However, in this particular case the environmental and economic benefits do not justify allowing the appeal given the harm I have identified.
10. I therefore conclude that by reason of its coverage and protrusion from the front elevation the proposal would fail to relate to the host property and would not respect the streetscene within Knebworth Avenue. As a result, it conflicts with Policy DM4(a)(i) and (ii) of the *London Borough of Waltham Forest Development Management Policies Local Plan*. This requires extensions and alterations to residential buildings to relate to the original host building, respect the streetscene and the character of the area and where appropriate retain and restore existing traditional features and materials. The scheme also conflicts with Policy DM29 which is concerned with good design, and, Policy CS15 of the *Waltham Forest Local Plan Core Strategy* which expects new development proposals to give strong recognition to local distinctiveness. Of the policies referred to by the Council I consider these to be the most relevant.

Other Matters

11. Applying render to the rear elevation would not have the same effect on the character and appearance of the host property or the streetscene within Knebworth Avenue. Nevertheless, the appellant has not indicated that they would wish to implement part of the scheme and only apply render at the rear. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis, and as applied for.

² APP/U5930/W/17/3175298

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Matthew Birkinshaw

INSPECTOR