
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: 6th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/17/3176030

88 Pretoria Avenue, Walthamstow, E17 6JY

- 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 170670, dated 21 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 allowed and planning permission is granted for external wall insulation to the front and back elevations, 90mm EPS system to be applied to external walls at 88 Pretoria Avenue, Walthamstow, E17 6JY, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 170670, dated 21 February 2017, 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: Location Plan, Block Plan, Plan View and Elevation Drawing.
 - 3) No development shall take place until samples of all external facing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The relevant works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved sample details.

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
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before me.¹ Despite the similarities I have determined each case on its own merits, and each appeal is subject to a separate decision.

4. At appeal the appellant has suggested that a 'brick-slip' finish could be used on the front elevation instead of render. Although this would have a different appearance to silicon, the nature of the appeal scheme and the principle of applying external wall insulation to the host property remain the same. The Council and other potentially interested parties have also had an opportunity to comment on the change as part of the appeal process. As a result, it would not prejudice or disadvantage any parties by taking into account the proposed use of brick-slip on the front elevation, and this is reflected in my decision above.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to a 2-storey mid-terraced house. Unlike other houses on the street it has retained its original brick exterior. Combined with the use of contrasting brickwork around the front door and bay windows this is part of the traditional character and appearance of the host property.
7. By applying an off-white silicon render to the front elevation this detail would be lost. In doing so the proposal would fail to respect the traditional character and appearance of the host property. I therefore fully appreciate the Council's concerns regarding the application of a modern silicon render in this context.
8. However, the appellant has suggested that a 'brick-slip' process could be used instead of render on the front elevation. The appellant has provided examples to illustrate where this has been used successfully elsewhere and demonstrates that it would look similar to a brick-built house. Based on the evidence provided this process would ensure that the host property would largely retain its original brick-built exterior. In addition, as the architectural features referred to by the Council only consist of contrasting brickwork, they could also be replicated. As a result, subject to agreeing an appropriate colour, which could be controlled by the use of planning conditions, the proposal would not materially harm the character and appearance of the existing house.
9. I appreciate that this is different to the conclusions reached in the appellant's other appeals for similar proposals referred to above. But the other properties either had decorative architectural features (not just contrasting brickwork) and/or formed part of largely unaltered rows of original terraces or pairs of semi-detached houses. This is not the case here. Instead, the host property is situated opposite a park and bounded on either side by houses with pebble-dashed exteriors. Furthermore, the Council's reason for refusal does not raise any concerns regarding the streetscene within Pretoria Avenue. The circumstances are therefore materially different. Because the proposal would not be viewed in the context of a row of adjoining houses with similar characteristics there is not the same requirement to match the existing bricks exactly or prevent the render from protruding 90mm from the front elevation.

¹ APP/U5930/W/17/3175295, APP/U5930/W/17/3175296, 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/17/3176033

10. I therefore conclude that subject to using a brick-slip finish the proposal would not cause any material harm to the character and appearance of the host property. As a result, there is no conflict with Policies DM4 or DM29 of the *London Borough of Waltham Forest Development Management Policies Local Plan* which, amongst other things are concerned with good design and ensuring that extensions and alterations to residential buildings 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. There is also no conflict with Policies CS2 or CS15 of the *Waltham Forest Local Plan Core Strategy* which requires high quality design from new housing development and expects proposals to give strong recognition to local distinctiveness.
11. In refusing planning permission the Council has also referred to Core Strategy Policy CS13. Although this relates to promoting health and well-being, I find no conflict with its requirements under criteria a)-g).

Conclusion and Conditions

12. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.
13. Aside from the standard time limit it is necessary to list the approved plans, in order to define the permission. Subject to listing the approved plans it is unnecessary to refer to the photographs submitted in support of the planning application, which also relate to the use of silicon render.
14. Finally, to ensure that the 'brick-slip' process is appropriate in colour and style it is necessary to require samples to be approved in writing prior to any work starting on site.

Matthew Birkinshaw

INSPECTOR