



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2017

by G D Jones BSc(Hons) DipTP DMS MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/17/3181289
63 Rochdale Road, Abbey Wood SE2 0XE

- 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 Mr G Vesey against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 17/1046/F, dated 30 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as the retention of the first floor rear extension to form a bedroom and a shower room / WC.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The first refusal reason makes reference to the site being located within a Conservation Area. However, the Council has subsequently confirmed that that is not the case and that, in its view, there is no effect on a Conservation Area resulting from the appeal development. I have assessed the appeal accordingly. Additionally, when I conducted my site visit I noted that building works were on-going, and that they appeared to be consistent with the proposed appeal scheme and to be reasonably close to completion.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect that the appeal development would have on the living conditions of the occupants of 61 Rochdale Road, particularly in terms of light, privacy and sense of enclosure, and on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Living Conditions

4. The appeal development extends substantially at first floor from the principal rear elevation of this two-storey, mid-terraced house. Neither of the immediately adjoining houses have been extended to the rear at first floor, although both have modest ground floor projections.
5. Given that it is set in from the boundary and as it would be located to the north, the appeal development does not have a significant effect on the living conditions of the occupants of No 65 in terms of sense of enclosure and light. Although there is a first floor side window in the appeal extension facing towards No 65, it is positioned at a reasonably high level such that views out would be limited.

However, in any event, that window is glazed with obscured glass such that there is no outward view. This is a matter that could potentially be controlled via condition in the event that planning permission were to be granted.

6. Nonetheless, the appeal development is located immediately adjacent to the boundary with No 61. The nearest first floor rear window of No 61 is likely to serve a landing rather than a habitable room. However, given the scale and proximity of the appeal extension to No 61's other windows, which appear likely to serve habitable rooms, and rear amenity space, combined with its siting to the south, the development is very likely to have a significant effect on the living conditions of residents of that neighbouring house in terms of sense of enclosure and loss of light.
7. As no side facing windows are proposed toward No. 61, I do not consider that the extension would – once brought into use – materially affect the privacy of occupants of that property. Nonetheless, for the reasons outlined above, the appeal development does detrimentally impact on the living conditions of the occupants of 61 Rochdale Road in terms of light and sense of enclosure, contrary in that regard to Policy 7.6 (Architecture) of the London Plan 2016 (the London Plan), Policy DH(b) (Protection of Amenity for Adjacent Occupiers) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy 2014 (the Core Strategy) and the Residential Extensions, Conversions and Basements Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (the SPD).

Character & Appearance

8. The appeal development features a first floor flat roof and is also a reasonably substantial addition to the host property – characteristics that do not sit comfortably with the relevant development plan policy. However, as it is located to the rear of the host terrace it has no effect on the street scene. What views that are available of the extension are limited to those from private property and these are largely constrained to reasonably near views by intervening planting and development.
9. There are also nearby comparable, albeit smaller scale, examples of two-storey, flat roofed, rear extensions that are visible from the appeal site. These do not, in my view, set any kind of precedent for development, but they do nonetheless, exercise an influence on the character and appearance of the rear of the terrace in the vicinity of the site such that the appeal development does not appear significantly out of keeping with the host property or the surrounding area.
10. For the reasons outlined, therefore, the appeal development does not have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building or the surrounding area. Consequently, in those respects, it does not conflict with Policies 7.4 (Local Character) and 7.6 of the London Plan, Policies DH1 (Design) and DH(a) (Residential Extensions) of the Core Strategy or with the SPD.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G D Jones

INSPECTOR