



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2017

by Jonathan Hockley BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 8th December 2017.

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Y/17/3179207

7 King George Street, Greenwich SE10 8QJ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mark Thompson against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 17/0249/L, dated 24 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2017.
 - The works proposed are described as 'The proposal is to deepen the existing basement and extend the basement to the front of this two bedroom Georgian terraced house, adding a light well to the front of the house in the same style as other houses on the street'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted to extend the existing basement incorporating a light well to the front of the house at 7 King George Street, Greenwich SE10 8QJ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 17/0249/L dated 24 January 2017 and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) No excavation shall take place on site until a method statement for demolition, including details of the precautions taken to secure and protect the exterior features of the grade II listed building against accidental loss or damage during the building work, have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The demolition shall be operated in accordance with the details so approved for the duration of the works. No such features shall be disturbed or removed temporarily or permanently except as indicated in the approved method statement and drawings (as applicable).
 - 3) No works shall take place above ground level until full details in relation to facing materials and finishes (which shall consist of a sample panel of all proposed facing materials showing the colour, texture, face bond and pointing) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall thereafter be implemented in complete accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) All new doors and windows shall be of timber and in matching details of the host building. Detailed specification should be submitted to the Council for approval prior to commencement of works. The doors and windows shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the Council's description of the proposed works in my decision above, as I consider this to be more precise than those on the application form.
3. Subsequent to my site visit I understand that the proposal formed the subject of applications for planning permission and listed building consent. While both applications were refused by the Council, the appeal has been lodged against the refusal of listed building consent only. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis. The grant of listed building consent does not obviate the need for a grant of planning permission for it.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposed basement would preserve the special architectural and historical interest of the Grade II listed building.

Reasons

5. No 7 King George Street is a Grade 2 listed dwelling as part of Nos 3-27 (odd) King George Street. The properties, dating from 1832-1836 were occupied according to the listing from a north east direction to the south west, with the higher numbers in the street being occupied first. The houses are built in stock brick laid in Flemish bond and have slate roofs. The properties all appear very similar to each other, aside from Nos 3 & 5 which have stuccoed ground floors. Windows are 12 pane sashes with noticeable voussoirs above ground floor openings. The listing notes that No 7 has a mid 19th century sash with verticals only and horns but this was not evident on my visit.
6. Internally, No 7 has 2 bedrooms in its 1st floor with a bathroom in an external outrigger set above the properties kitchen. An open plan dining room and living room is accessed off the hallway from where stairs lead both up to the 1st floor, and down to the basement. This basement is of a reasonable size and height and sits beneath the dining room, with a partially sunken window providing natural light from the back garden.
7. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special interest to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building and any features or architectural interest it possesses. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration of a heritage asset. The significance of the property is derived from the age of the property, the quality of its simple form and materials and as part of a whole of the northern side of the street.
8. Policies DH1, Dh3, and DH(i) of the Local Plan¹ together state that all developments are required to be of a high quality of design, and that the Royal Borough will protect and enhance heritage assets, applying a presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. External or internal alterations should respect the integrity of the buildings and harmonise with their special architectural or historical character. Policy 7.8 of the London Plan² states that

¹ Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, July 2014.

² The London Plan consolidated with alterations since 2011, March 2016.

- development affecting heritage assets should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.
9. The proposal seeks to extend the basement of the property to cover the full length of the main area of the dwelling, allowing a larger bedroom to be constructed with a small WC/shower room. A lightwell would be constructed at the front of the property within the small front yard of the house. The current basement would also be slightly deepened, with a floor level of -2.63m, as opposed to the current -2.3m.
 10. Concern is raised that the proposal would adversely affect the plan form of the property. However, the original building already has an existing basement floor, which is perfectly usable with reasonable head height, and was in use at the time of my visit. While the proposal would slightly deepen and extend this area I do not consider therefore that this alteration to an existing floor of the property would adversely affect the historic floor plan of the building. The scheme would be fairly small in scale, and by largely staying within the footprint of the property would remain subordinate to the overall building, respecting the integrity and inherent modesty of the heritage asset.
 11. Externally, the lightwell would be visible by those passing the property. However, an example of a current basement at No 13 King George Street, by virtue of its design and location behind the painted wooden railings is reasonably well screened and does not draw the eye or deflect from the significance of the listed building. I do not consider therefore that, subject to conditions regarding detailing of materials and finishes, the proposal would cause harm to the setting or the significance of the listed building.
 12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historical interest of the Grade II listed building. The proposal would comply with the Framework, Policies DE1, DE3 and DE(i) of the Local Plan and policy 7.8 of the London Plan.

Conditions

13. I have imposed the standard conditions relating to time for implementation to provide certainty. Conditions are also imposed concerning demolition details and the proposed finishes and materials of the construction of the proposal and the doors and window. Such conditions are necessary in the interests of the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building to ensure that the materials and architectural detail of the proposal conserves the significance of the heritage asset.
14. Concern is raised over possible disturbance that the scheme could cause local residents in terms of construction and excavation. Such matters in terms of the living conditions of neighbouring residents during construction and highway safety would be required to be addressed through the planning process.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and listed building consent granted.

Jon Hockley

INSPECTOR