
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 November 2017

by S Jones MA DipLP

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

Decision date: 17 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/17/3181817
40 The Heights, London SE7 8JH

- 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 Clementini against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 17/1071/F, dated 3 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 14 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and storage and construction of an end-of-terrace dwelling house together with external and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is the side garden to a two storey semi-detached property on a corner plot. It lies on a hillside of predominantly interwar style semi-detached and detached dwellings of similar design, and other more recent modern style developments opposite and along the road.
4. As a result of its corner location, the appeal site has a constrained irregular triangular shape that narrows towards the rear. From the appellants submissions it is stated that the two rear gardens are similar in size (no 38-93m² and No 40-112m²) so it is only the front and side garden to No 40 which is larger (No 38-56m² and No 40-99m²). The Council raised several concerns relating to the character and appearance of the proposed development if built on the corner garden, amongst them the fact that the design chosen to fit on the site would mean the new dwelling would be designed very differently to the adjoining pair of semi-detached. In my view its addition would effectively result in a final appearance more like a short terrace rather than a pair of semi-detached. The new dwelling would be smaller than comparable dwellings without reflecting their distinctive features. In particular, the distinctive side elevation projecting window feature at No 40 would be removed, which would be harmful to its character and appearance. As a result of the development the existing pattern of the regular semi-detached dwellings would be disrupted and

the resultant composition as a whole would be unbalanced and incongruous because of the design variation and differing size and scale.

5. Furthermore, it would intensify the built form onsite and occupy a much denser footprint compared to the general appearance of the interwar dwellings. The appellant also refers to another corner development nearby, but I note an extension to an existing dwelling is not directly comparable to a new dwelling and does not require a separate division of amenity space. I note from my visit to the area that the particular example given is also set back and subservient to the main dwelling. The appellant refers to the site as being underutilised and unmanaged, but in fact its current use as the garage and garden to the property is appropriate to the site. I appreciate that the provision of further housing within London would be an advantage of the proposal, however there is no evidence in the appeal that the Royal Borough of Greenwich is not delivering its housing as planned. Although the area is interspersed by a variety of development, the interwar style dwellings are regularly spaced and do have a distinctive style and characteristics that would be detrimentally affected by this unsympathetic development. For these reasons it would be harmful to the characteristics of the area.
6. Consequently it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the pair of semi-detached dwellings and the surrounding area, and there are no other matters which would outweigh that harm. I conclude it would conflict with Policies DH1, H(c) and H5 of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies and London Plan Policies 7.4 and 7.6, which together seek to secure high quality development that reflects local characteristics.

Conclusion

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

S Jones

INSPECTOR