
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 September 2019

by R Morgan MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/19/3228908
101 Well Hall Road, Eltham, SE9 6TR

- 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 S Bhayani against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0327/HD, dated 29 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is construction of a single storey side and rear wrap around extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice which more accurately reflects the proposal than the description on the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Progress Estate Conservation Area (PECA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within the PECA which is an early example of Garden Suburb planning, characterised by a relatively low density development of attractive cottages with gardens and green spaces. The estate of 1200 houses was built in 1915 and the original features of the street layout and design of the houses remains remarkably intact. The two storey cottages are set in individually designed groups of terraces with stepped arrangements of buildings. Although there is variation in design the cottages display a consistent window pattern and have prominent roofscapes with varied but repetitive use of gables and chimney stacks. These features add considerably to the significance of the PECA.
5. The appeal property is located at the end of a row and is set back from the adjoining cottage. It is located on a sweeping curve in the road and has a large side garden, both of which are notable features of the estate layout. Its location at the end of the group of cottages and on the curve of the road means that both the front and side elevations are visible from the street.

6. The property is located at the edge of the PECA, fronting onto the busy Well Hall Road and close to a large roundabout. The road and associated infrastructure significantly affect the character of this part of the PECA but the appeal property nevertheless makes a positive contribution to the area.
7. The proposed single storey side extension would be set back quite significantly from the front elevation to reflect the stepping of the group of cottages. This set back would also enable the existing dormer window and door in the side elevation to be retained. However, the width of the proposed side extension would be more than half of that of the front elevation and would fail to respect the proportions of the main dwelling. As a result it would appear overly large and awkward. Furthermore, the pitch of the roof would be shallower than that of the main house. The repeating steep gables are an important feature of the PECA and the proposed roof, which would be clearly visible from the street, would appear out of character with the house and wider area. I note that the windows and materials are designed to reflect the original cottage but these positive aspects of the scheme would not overcome the harm that I have identified.
8. There would undoubtedly be a reduction in the open garden space between the host property and 25 Cobbett Road. However, a substantial open area would be retained between the two properties and, given the proposed set back, the proposed development would not compromise the impression of openness when viewed from the street to an unacceptable degree.
9. I conclude that, as a result of its scale and design, the proposed development would cause harm to the host dwelling and the wider PECA. With regard to paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), this harm would be less than substantial. Even so this still amounts to a harmful impact which would adversely affect the significance of the designated heritage asset. Paragraph 193 of the Framework requires that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the level of harm.
10. The Framework requires that harm to the conservation area should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal but I have identified no such benefits which would outweigh the harm identified.
11. The proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Progress Estate Conservation Area. It would be contrary to Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of The London Plan 2016; Policies DH1, DH3, DH(a) and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan 2014; detailed guidance in the Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance SPD and the Progress Estate Conservation Area Character Appraisal, which require developments to respect the character of the area and protect the historic environment. Furthermore, the proposal would conflict with the Framework.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

Rosie Morgan

INSPECTOR