



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2019

by L Gilbert BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/D/19/3233441

8 Burnham Close, London SE1 5RL

- 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 H Shuja against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref 19/AP/0755, dated 8 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is loft extension to a one bedroom property. Extension will be clad in copper and provide an additional floor of accommodation.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a modest two storey end of terrace property. It is part of an 'L' shaped housing development within a modern uniform housing estate. The properties are an unusual design, separated into two with each sharing half the roof space and floor levels. The appeal property and the other end of terraced houses have lower ridge heights and recessed building lines compared to the adjacent houses. The appeal site is prominent as it fronts onto an open car park area, bordered by houses and with a footpath along the side of the property.
4. The appeal development would raise the roof ridge by extending the existing roof plane forwards. Part of the proposal would also extend the roof above the proposed first floor extension. I note the proposal would be set in from one side of the roof and part of it would be set up from the existing eaves.
5. However, the combination of the scale, height and position of the proposed roof extension would disrupt the uniform nature of the row of terraced properties and unbalance the end of terraced properties of No 19 Burnham Close and No 37 Bushwood Drive. The roof extension would appear bulky and dominate the front roof slope and would detract from the existing uniform nature of the row of terraced houses.
6. The appellant has argued that the area has no sense of identity other than a generic brick and tiled roof appearance and that the area is predominantly

- industrial. They also consider the houses in the area to be fairly homogeneous and characterless. The appellant considers the 'pared back appearance' is relative to the existing elevation, which has no style or interest.
7. However, because the appeal property is part of a housing development that is consistent in its design, materials and fenestrations; it is my view that it does have its own identity and character. The appeal development would therefore harm this sense of identity. The end of terraced houses has shallower roofs and sit considerably lower than the adjoining row of terraced houses along Burnham Close. In my view, the addition of a large roof extension would notably diminish this step down from the adjoining property of No 9 Burnham Close and would harm this key characteristic and feature of the housing estate.
 8. The appellant points out that the wider site context includes industrial and taller residential buildings and that they also gave consideration to the scale and position of the appeal development in relation to neighbouring properties. I accept that the wider site context may differ from that of the housing estate, however it is important that the proposal complements its immediate setting. The closest buildings to the appeal site comprise of residential properties, generally at two storeys high. I accept the proposed development would not dominate No 9 Burnham Close, however it would stand higher than the adjacent property of No 37 Bushwood Drive, albeit it would not impose over it. Regardless, I have identified harm with the proposal which this would not outweigh.
 9. Pre-treated copper cladding and aluminium slide windows would be used on the roof extension. The appeal property and adjoining row of terraced houses all have tiled roofs. According to the appellant, copper was selected to tie in with the houses and their red brickwork and the industrial nature of the wider area. Also, because it has a softer more lighter appearance. It would be treated to retain its colour. However, the contrasting finish on the proposed roof extension would reinforce its bulk, scale and inharmonious design.
 10. The fenestrations on the proposed roof addition adds to the inconsistent design as the proposed large vertical windows would be positioned in an illogical manner. In contrast the adjoining row of terraced properties have roof windows which align with and are a similar size to those on the houses. The proposed roof windows therefore detract from the uniform nature of the adjoining houses that front into the car park courtyard.
 11. The appeal development consists of remodelling the front of the property with the addition of a first floor extension and moving the main entrance door. As the front extension would link to the proposed roof extension, it would create an additional storey that would appear at odds with the neighbouring properties. Although the appeal development does not project above the adjoining taller terraced properties, it is not a dissimilar height and therefore it would disrupt the existing pattern of development of notably smaller end of terraced properties.
 12. The proposed relocation of the front door from a central position, to replace a window and remodelling of the existing canopy would result in a loss of the existing architectural characteristics of the property. As the appeal house is part of a consistently designed row of properties, the culmination of these changes would have a negative impact by eroding these important design

features. It would therefore unbalance the end of terraced properties, to the detriment to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

13. I accept that the appeal site is not adjacent to a major highway and is in a corner of the cul-de-sac. The appellant considers it would be a prime location for a unique piece of quality architecture. However, the appeal development would still be highly visible from the car park in front of the site and the houses that surround it. However, some of these houses would have direct views of the proposal. There is also a road leading into Burnham Close and footpaths around it, which offer views of the site.
14. Consequently, I find that the appeal development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area and thus being contrary to Policy SP12 of Southwark Council Core Strategy (2011) which seeks amongst other things, that development will achieve the highest possible standards of design for buildings and public spaces to help create attractive and distinctive places and Policy 3.12 of the Saved The Southwark Plan (2007) which seeks amongst other things that alterations to existing buildings should embody a creative and high quality appropriate design solution, specific to their site's shape, size, location and development opportunities and where applicable, preserving or enhancing the historic environment. It also is contrary to the 2015 Technical Update to the Residential Design Standards (2011) that seeks amongst other things for all extensions should be successfully integrated with their surroundings. The extension should read as if it were part of the original building. Where a different approach is taken, the design and composition should be successful. It should retain or restore existing features that are important elements in the townscape or that contribute to the architectural integrity of proportions of a building or group of buildings; and should be subordinate to the original buildings.

Other Matters

15. I acknowledge the appellant's comments regarding the processing of the planning application. I also note that the property has no permitted development rights, rear elevation or private amenity space. The proposal would involve modernising the property to allow the owners to stay in the area. The appellant highlighted the proposal would create a flexible and usable space as there is a lack of shared amenity space in the area. They also consider it would not have an adverse impact on neighbours. I accept that the site is not listed or within a conservation area. Whilst I acknowledge the points raised by the appellant, none of these matters outweigh the harm I have identified.
16. The appellant has highlighted other residential sites involving the addition of front dormer extensions that have either raised the roof height or have been constructed from a contrasting material. They also query the architectural quality of some dormers in Southwark and a lack of conformity. As I do not have all the details about these cases I cannot give them much weight and in any event, I must decide this appeal on its own merit and having regard to the development plan and other relevant adopted policies.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the proposed development would not accord with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

L Gilbert

INSPECTOR