The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/19/3237266
7 Waller Road, London SE14 5LE

- 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 A Savio against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
- The application Ref DC/18/110123, dated 7 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 June 2019.
- The development proposed is described as 'reconfiguration of the property to comprise three self-contained flats, including the conversion of the attic space, with the formation of a rear roof extension with projecting dormer window on the rear pitch of the main roof slope, two rooflights on the front roof slope and a modest rear ground floor extension'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

   i. The effect of the rear roof extension on the character and appearance of the Telegraph Hill Conservation Area; and

   ii. The effect of the appeal proposal on the living conditions of future occupiers of flat 3.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The Telegraph Hill Conservation Area (the conservation area) is largely formed of a well-preserved planned development of aesthetically pleasing late 19th century houses. The form, scale, materials and detailing of these buildings are defining features of its character and appearance.

4. The roof-slopes of the properties on this section of Waller Road are predominantly unaltered and largely retain their original form thus forming a consistent feature of this part of the conservation area.

5. The proposal would introduce a flat roofed extension to the rear roof-slope of the property which would span its full width, which would match the height of the existing ridgeline and which would extend out to the eaves on the main rear elevation. As a result, it would be a bulky addition which

would completely obscure the existing main rear roof-slope along with a section of the roof on the rear outrigger.

6. It is accepted that the rear roof slopes have less visibility than those on the front elevation of the properties and that the rear roof slopes are partially obscured by the rear outriggers. However, the rear roof slopes at the appeal property do have visibility from rear gardens on this part of Waller Road as well as Myrtle House, closely to the east.

7. Even though matching materials are proposed, the roof extension would harm the appearance of the property. Subsequently, it would detract from the heritage significance of the conservation area which lies in part with the form, scale, materials and detailing of its buildings.

8. The harm to the significance of the conservation area would be less than substantial. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires such harm to be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.

9. The roof extension would facilitate the provision of a 1-bedroom residential unit on the top floor of the building and this benefit is afforded weight. However, given the degree of harm I have found that would arise from the appeal scheme, which would be visible to many people and the statutory protection afforded to conservation areas, such benefit would not be sufficient to outweigh this harm.

10. Consequently, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and would be contrary to Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), Policies 15 and 16 of the Lewisham Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011) and Policies 30, 31 and 36 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014) (LDMLP). Amongst other requirements these policies seek good quality design that is appropriate to local character and which protects heritage assets.

11. The proposal would also fail to accord with planning guidance[1] which advises that within conservation areas rear roof extensions should be set in significantly from the eaves, ridge and sides and be no wider than two thirds of the original, unextended roof.

Living conditions

12. The London Plan Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2016) requires a minimum provision of private open space of 5sqm for a 1-2 person dwelling such as flat 3.

13. However, no private open space would be provided in association this flat. The SPG does allow for the provision of additional internal floor area in compensation, however this would not be provided, as the flat only meets the minimum floor space requirement of 50sqm.

14. I accept that there are public open spaces in the area, which would offer some alternative to private open space and that such a flat may be less likely to be occupied by a family. However, I do not consider such factors provide any clear and robust justification to depart from the required

[1] Lewisham Alterations and Extensions Supplementary planning document (2019)

standards. I also note that flat 3 would provide a residential unit, but this would represent only a very small contribution to housing supply. Further, the floor space requirements are a minimum, which developers are encouraged to exceed.

15. The appeal proposal would therefore result in cramped accommodation which would not be the high-quality housing that the SPG and policy plan for. Consequently, the flat would provide fail to provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers.

16. The appeal proposal would therefore be contrary to SPG guidance and Policy 32 of the LDMLP which relates to housing space standards.

Other Matters

17. The appellant has drawn my attention to other roof extensions in support of the scheme. The evidence indicates that the dormer window at 3 Waller Road is of a significantly different design and therefore is not directly comparable. I have not been supplied with details relating to 21 Waller Road. I therefore afford these examples little weight and they do not justify a planning permission in this instance. In any event, each case should be considered on its own merits.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR