



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2020

by D Hilton-Brown BSc (Hons) CIEEM

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/19/3239566
26 Meridian Road, Charlton SE7 8QJ

- 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 Ali against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 19/2872/HD, dated 13 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a ground floor rear extension, double storey side extension and roof alterations including skylights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. An existing conservatory is already located to the rear of the appeal property. Although not referred to in the original planning application, the proposal would require the removal of this existing structure to enable the development to proceed. This is referenced by both the appellant and the Council and I have therefore assessed the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - (a) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area and;
 - (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of Number (No) 24 Meridian Road, having particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is situated in a residential area consisting of terraced and semi-detached properties mostly of a similar character and design. The proposed development of this end terrace house would involve the demolition of an existing conservatory, construction of a single storey rear extension and two storey side extension with hipped roof profile.
5. The Council considers that the character and appearance of the single storey rear extension would be acceptable. Following my site visit and the evidence

- before me, I agree with their findings on this matter. The scale and design ensure that it would remain subordinate to the host building and it would be partially screened on three sides and not visible from the street.
6. The Council also acknowledged that in principle side extensions to existing dwelling houses are acceptable, providing they ensure a high-quality neighbourly design. Guidance on the provision of extensions is given in the Royal Borough of Greenwich Supplementary Planning Document entitled Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document, 2016 (SPD).
 7. This document makes clear that side extensions can have a negative impact upon the character and setting of a street, and that consequently extensions should remain secondary in both size and appearance to the host property. The SPD further explains that this can be achieved by ensuring that the ridge height of the extension is set below that of the host property, and that the extension should be set back from the front wall of the host property.
 8. In the proposal before me, the two-storey side extension's roof would not be set below the existing ridge height of the host dwelling. Furthermore, there would be a limited setback at first floor and no setback at the ground floor level. The result of this would be an extension that would appear dominating, and which would fail to be subservient or remain secondary in appearance to the host dwelling.
 9. Despite being setback from the road and the proposed use of sympathetic materials, the side extension would still have a prominent and dominant form within the streetscene. This would be exacerbated by the appeal properties prominent end of terrace position within Meridian Road. The proposed side extension would be clearly visible from the Canberra Road end of Meridian Road. It would therefore have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the immediate area and the host property.
 10. I acknowledge that this property forms part of a terrace of houses, which all have similar roof ridge heights. However, failure to reduce the height of the side extension would result in the extension having the appearance of an overly large end terrace property, incongruous with the host property, and which would unbalance the established pattern and symmetry of the terraced block.
 11. The appellant has pointed out that planning permission has been granted for two other side extensions in the area (Reference numbers: 16/1549/F and 16/0802/F). However, I am not aware of the particular circumstances or planning history of these cases, or whether they were approved before the adoption of the Council's SPD in 2016. In any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits. The existence of other extensions in the locality does not justify the harm I have identified or set a precedent for this development.
 12. The proposed two storey side extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area due to its height and lack of setback. As such the proposed development would fail to comply with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, The Spatial Development Strategy For London, 2016 (London Plan), Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan, Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, 2014 (Core Strategy) and the Council's SPD. Together these require that development be appropriate to the

scale and design of the host building and the locality, while making a positive contribution to the character of a place.

Living conditions

13. The proposed single storey rear extension would be approximately 4.3 metres (m) in length and be situated in close proximity to the shared boundary with No 24. This structure would include two windows in the side elevation, which would overlook the garden of No 24 and provide oblique views into the ground floor windows of this property.
14. However, the existing conservatory also contains windows along this entire elevation with No 24. The proposed development would only contain two windows and would be situated approximately the same distance from the neighbouring property as the existing structure. From my site visit I also observed that there was an existing timber fence of approximately 1.8 m high which partially obscured views into the neighbouring property. Additionally, the nearest window of this next-door dwelling was within a rear door containing obscure glazing, which would further reduce the effects of the proposed rear extension.
15. Furthermore, the appellant has expressed a willingness in his statement to include obscure fixed glazing to approximately 1.8 m in height to prevent overlooking of No 24. I therefore consider that if I were going to allow this appeal, an appropriately worded condition to this effect could have satisfactorily resolved this matter.
16. A condition relating to obscure glazing with limited opening in the side elevation with No 24, could therefore prevent any detrimental impact on the living conditions of No 24 in relation to privacy. This would comply with Policy DH(b) of the Core Strategy, which requires that development does not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy to adjacent occupiers. It would also comply with the SPD, which recommends that any windows to the side of a property may be acceptable if they cannot be opened and are obscurely glazed.

Other Matters

17. The appellant references the lack of any objections from the neighbouring properties and the benefits to the householders and future occupants of No 26 Meridian Road. However, these do not outweigh the harm I have already identified in relation to the issue of character and appearance.

Conclusion

18. The appeal proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 24. However, it would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area, which outweighs the lack of harm found on the issue of living conditions. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hilton-Brown

INSPECTOR