The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2020

by Mr W Johnson BA(Hons) DipTP DipUDR MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/19/3241901
1 Brodrick Grove, Abbey Wood, London SE2 0SR

- 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 Konstantin Kalabin against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
- The application Ref 19/1923/HD, dated 28 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 September 2019.
- The development proposed is described as: 'One storey first floor side extension and formation of hip to gable extension with elevated roof ridge at height to match adjoining property'.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. For clarity and precision, I have inserted 'London' to the address and the appellant's first name, in the banner heading above, as they are both listed on the appeal form.

3. The return road to the appeal site is listed on the evidence before me as Abbey Wood Road. However, during my site visit, it became evident due to a road sign, close to the junction with Bostall Manorway that the road adjacent to the side elevation of the host property is Blithdale Road. I have dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal property is an end terraced house, located at the corner of Brodrick Grove and Blithdale Road. The dwelling has a render finish on its main elevations and a tiled hipped roof. A small gable is present with the adjoining property[1] that results in an increased ridge height at this neighbouring property. This is a notable feature within the street scene and is evident at regular intervals on the houses on Brodrick Grove, due to the changes in topography and the increase in land levels towards Mcleod Road. The proposal seeks alterations to the roof, through the introduction of a gable end, increase

[1] No 3 Brodrick Grove

in ridge height, dormer extension on the rear roof slope and a first-floor side extension.

6. The host dwelling forms part of a small group of end terraced houses that are similar in design and on the same side of the road as the host dwelling. The wider street scene consists of largely terraced houses, where hipped roofs are a predominant feature, and are clearly visible when viewed from public land. This forms a strong and positive characteristic in the street scene, meaning I consider that the appeal site is located within an area of similar properties that maintains a sense of rhythm and balance, supported by the presence of hipped roofs in the immediate vicinity of the site.

7. The proposed development through its design and form, with particular regard to the gable end, increased ridge height and rear dormer extension would result in an incongruous addition that would dominate the roof, fundamentally altering its shape and unbalancing its form and relationship with its neighbouring dwellings, in particular the neighbouring end terrace houses on the same side of Blithdale Road as the host dwelling.

8. Additionally, whilst the host dwelling already benefits from a 2no. storey rear and single storey side extension, both with flat roofs, the proposed first-floor side extension, with its flat roof would do little to improve the appearance of the host dwelling. This element of the development would be unacceptably emphasised through its proximity to the shared boundary with the footpath on Blithdale Road, despite its modest projection along the side elevation. The resulting significant adverse effect from the proposed development on the host dwelling would be readily visible in the street scene to the detriment of character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

9. My attention has been drawn to other developments in the area[2]. Whilst noting the presence of these properties, relatively little detail has been provided regarding the particular planning background to these schemes. Without such information a full and detailed comparison between these developments and the case before me cannot be made, except insofar, I was able to observe and assess the sites at my visit. In any event, the fact that the existence of these properties is not a reason, on its own, to allow otherwise unacceptable development.

10. Although the facing materials in construction are likely to be similar to those present on the host dwelling, this would not provide sufficient mitigation to outweigh the harm otherwise arising. In his representations, the appellant has referred to works allowed under permitted development. However, no additional details have been provided, and without this detailed information a comparison between this alternative scheme and the case before me cannot be drawn. Additionally, as there is little to indicate a reasonable prospect of such development taking place, little weight can be given to this matter.

11. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area. This would be contrary to the design, character and appearance aims of Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan

[2] Appendix I: Similar Developments in the Surrounding Area and Appendix II: Photos and Descriptions of Similar Developments in the Surrounding Area

Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014), Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016), and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

12. I have had regard to no adverse comments being received from a living conditions perspective. However, a lack of harm associated with living conditions is a neutral factor that weighs neither for nor against the development. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above.

13. I have had regard to various other matters raised by the appellant, including his desire to create additional and flexible accommodation. Additionally, I note the assertion regarding a possible prevention of heat loss through increased insulation being installed within the host dwelling and to an increase in the overall density of the site. However, on the evidence before me these are not reasons to grant permission in the face of the harm identified.

Conclusion

14. Given my findings above, the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area, which would conflict with parts of the environmental objective set out in paragraph 8 of the Framework. Thus, the proposal does not constitute sustainable development.

15. Taking all matters into consideration, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

W Johnson

INSPECTOR