



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2020

by Patrick Hanna MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/20/3252000

24 Hervey Road, Kidbrooke, London SE3 8BS

- 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 Tom Doran against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 19/2327/F, dated 1 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of a 3-storey side extension with basement to create 1 x 3-bed residential dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. As the description of the development given on the application form is inaccurate, for clarity I have used that provided on the appeal form and the Council's decision notice.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the Sun in the Sands Conservation Area (SSCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a large three-storey detached former dwellinghouse, now sub-divided into smaller units, forming part of a group of three former dwellinghouses of uniform appearance. Dating from between 1896-1916, the site is within what the SSCA Character Appraisal (2007)(CA) describes as a residential area that grew up around the eighteenth-century Sun Inn.
5. The significance of the SSCA derives from, amongst other things, survival of buildings from different periods, original grain and plot boundaries, and relatively low density. The appeal building makes a positive contribution to the significance of this heritage asset.
6. The effect of the proposal would be to erect a three-storey side extension almost flush with the existing front elevation, but with differing window arrangement. The ridge and eaves height of the proposal would be lower than existing and, as a result, the proposed windows are also at lower levels. As a result, the proposal fails to continue the strong horizontal window alignment that is currently evident across the three building frontages.

7. The proportions of the gable window to the gable itself would be overlarge in comparison with existing gable windows, whereas the proportions of the other proposed windows and door would be squatter than existing. Given that no notable setback is proposed from the building frontage, the proposed design would have a discordant appearance when seen alongside the existing building. This effect would be clearly visible from the public realm within the SSCA, notwithstanding landscape screening to the west.
8. The proposed scale and massing would be subservient to the host building. However, the plot size and frontage would be substantially smaller than existing buildings in the area. Although the original plot boundaries no longer exist between the three buildings in the group, the proposed dwelling would fully occupy the space between the existing building and the plot boundary. Accordingly, this introduces a much denser development pattern than currently exists along this section of Hervey Road, notwithstanding that there are smaller plots elsewhere in the SSCA.
9. As a consequence, the proposal would appear to be squeezed onto the site in stark contrast to the large buildings in spacious surrounds in the vicinity. Although national policy is keen not to discourage innovation or change, the overall effect of the proposal, when these various elements are seen together, would be out of keeping with the host building and the SSCA.
10. The statutory duty in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is a matter of considerable importance and weight. The proposal would have a negative effect on the significance of a designated heritage asset and would result in less than substantial harm, in the words of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Under such circumstances paragraph 196 of the Framework indicates that the harm should be weighed against public benefits.
11. The public benefits to be gained from one additional dwelling to housing supply would be limited, even though the Council is currently required to prepare an action plan to assess under-delivery under the Housing Delivery Test. Maximising potential of an underutilised section of the site is also a public benefit of limited weight. The use of materials to complement existing is cited as a benefit, but this is essentially of neutral weight in the planning balance. However, even together these public benefits are outweighed by the great weight I attach to preserving the character and appearance of the SSCA.
12. I conclude that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the SSCA, contrary to policies DH1, DH3 and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014), and policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016). Whilst the CA does not contain development management tests against which the proposal can be assessed, together these policies require new development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Other matters

13. The appellant argues that the proposal represents a high-quality sustainable form of development in an accessible location; would provide outdoor amenity space, parking, cycle and waste storage; and would not harm the living

conditions of neighbours. However, these are matters that even together do not outweigh the harm I have found above.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Patrick Hanna

INSPECTOR