



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 September 2020 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by Sarah Housden BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/20/3250884

448 Green Lane, Eltham, SE9 3TG

- 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 Wesley Thorne against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 20/0251/HD, dated 9 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a double storey side and part double/part single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The proposal is described as a double storey side and part double/part single storey rear extension, however the Council's description of the development shown on the decision notice is for a part single, part two-storey side extension, two-storey rear extension and a front porch. Upon inspection of the submitted drawings, I consider the Council's description to be more accurate and I have therefore used this description as the basis for my assessment.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area; and
 - The effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 446 and 450 Green Lane, with particular regard to light and outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling with an attached garage. The proposed development would replace the garage with a part single, part two-storey side extension adjacent to the boundary with No 450 Green Lane, a two-storey rear extension, and a front porch.
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Character and appearance

6. Development in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site comprises detached properties which are built to the same original design, although some have been previously extended. The majority of dwellings in the road have retained the gap between the adjoining property at first floor level, maintaining the separation between dwellings and contributing to a regular spacing between properties. Their pyramidal roof form is also a distinctive feature which creates a degree of unity in the Green Lane street scene.
7. I note that the Council raised no objection to the proposed front porch and based on the evidence before me I have no reason to disagree.
8. Guidance in the Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (December 2018) (SPD) states that side extensions should accurately reflect the style of the main house and remain secondary in size and appearance, and that the ridge height of the roof of a side extension should be set below the ridge height of the host property to ensure the extension is secondary to the original house. The SPD states that two-storey side extensions and first-floor extensions above existing garages must be designed so as to avoid a terracing effect, or the loss of the open character between properties.
9. The proposed extension would wrap around the side and rear of the existing property. The single-storey element of the side extension would project forwards of the existing front wall, however this would be in keeping with the extensions at Nos 442 and 450. However, the introduction of built form at first floor level in this location would add substantial mass to the dwelling. The proposed two-storey element would not be set back from the existing front wall of the dwelling and the ridge line of the extension would match the ridge line of the existing roof, and therefore the proposed side extension would not appear secondary to the original house.
10. The proposed extension would infill most of the space at first floor level between the appeal property and No 450. Furthermore, while the extension would not project beyond the front bay window, the lack of any setting back of the extension from the existing front wall would contribute to a terracing effect. This would be harmful to the regular spacing of dwellings that contributes to the character of the development along Green Lane. Moreover, the distinctive pyramidal roof form would be lost. For these reasons, the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.
11. Some properties in the street have existing two-storey side extensions, and my attention has been drawn to two recent side extensions that have received planning approval, at No 440 Green Lane¹ and No 452 Green Lane². However, while these extensions have substantially reduced the open character between the adjacent properties, the first-floor element of these extensions are set back considerably from the front wall in order to prevent a terracing effect and these extensions appear secondary to the original house.
12. Therefore, for the reasons above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (March 2016) (LP), Policies DH1

¹ Planning application ref. 16/3391/F

² Planning application ref. 19/1118/HD

and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy (July 2014) (CS), and the guidance in the SPD. These policies all seek, in various ways, for the size, scale and design of a development to be appropriate to its context and the surrounding streetscape.

Living conditions

13. The proposed two-storey side and rear extension would project approximately 3.5 metres from the existing rear wall of the dwelling and would be constructed with a blank elevation facing the boundaries of both Nos 446 and 450.
14. The orientation of the proposed extension to the south of No 446 would cause some overshadowing of and a loss of sunlight to the rear garden of No 446. However, as the rear garden of No 446 is long, only a small part of its rear garden would be affected, and this would be most pronounced during the middle of the day. Due to the position of No 446's garage, an adequate separation distance between the extension and the rear windows of No 446 would be maintained and the proposal would not cause material harm to the outlook from that property. For these reasons the proposed extension would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of No 446's occupiers with regards to overshadowing, and loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook.
15. The windows in the side elevation of No 450 do not serve habitable rooms and therefore there would be no material harm to living conditions arising from a loss of daylight to or outlook from those windows. The orientation of the extension to the north of No 450 would also ensure that there would be no overshadowing or loss of sunlight overshadowing of No 450's windows or rear garden.
16. The extension would be set away from the common boundary with No 450 by approximately 0.6 metres at the ground floor and approximately 1 metre at the first-floor level. Such an expanse of blank wall would be an obtrusive feature and due to its proximity would cause a significant overbearing impact and increased sense of enclosure to the users of the rear garden of No 450 as well as to its rear ground floor bay window. For this reason, the proposal would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 450. I note that the two-storey rear extension at No 452 projects along the boundary with No 450, however there is a greater separation to the rear ground floor bay window at No 450 which reduces the impact of the extension at No 452.
17. Whilst the SPD does not outline specific dimensions for the depth of two storey rear extensions, it does advise that there should be an appropriate separation distance between the property and its boundaries and that rear extensions should not create a sense of enclosure for neighbouring occupiers. The appeal proposal would not accord with that aspect of the guidance.
18. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy 7.6 of the LP, Policy DH(b) of the CS and the guidance in the SPD. These policies and advice all seek, amongst other things, to prevent development from causing unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, including from a sense of enclosure.
19. The appellant refers to the existing two-storey rear extensions at Nos 440 and No 452 Green Lane as examples of where similar sized rear extensions have been permitted. I have referred to No 452 in relation to the impact on No 450

above, but I do not have further details of these proposals and cannot be sure whether the circumstances of those sites or the balance of considerations which informed those decisions are directly comparable with the case before me. In any case, this appeal has been determined on its own merits.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

21. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Sarah Housden

INSPECTOR