

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2021

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/20/3263166

139 Domonic Drive, Eltham SE9 3LH

- 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 J Barker against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 20/2533/HD, dated 24 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision notice refers to a policy from the London Plan (2016). However, since the decision was made this plan has been replaced by the new London Plan, published in March 2021, which includes different policies. The policy relevant to this appeal in the previous plan is a strategic policy dealing with design matters. As such, I consider that there would be no prejudice to any parties' interests were I to rely for the purposes of this appeal on the local policies and guidance referred to by the Council, which address the same matters.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two story semi-detached dwelling in a residential road of similar property types.
 5. Policy DH1 of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy and Detailed Policies (2014) (CSDP) requires a high quality of design in new development, while Policy DH(a) includes the requirement that residential extensions should be limited to a scale and design appropriate to the building and locality.
 6. The *Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance* Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides guidance to support these
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development plan policies. It says that side extensions should accurately reflect the style of the main house and remain secondary in size and appearance. The ridge height of the roof of a side extension should be set below the existing ridge height to ensure the extension is secondary to the original house; and the extension should normally be set back slightly from the front wall of the house to allow the original house to remain prominent. The height and width of the side extension should be proportionate to the main house, and the width should be less than half the width of the main house. Two storey side extensions must be designed so as to avoid a terracing effect, or the loss of the open character between properties¹.

7. A significant number of properties along this part of Domonic Drive have been extended, including several which have a similar form of side extension to that proposed here, as noted by the appellant. Therefore, these are part of the existing character of the street scene and the fact that the extension would not be subordinate to the original dwelling in terms of its height or forward projection should not in principle count against the proposal, particularly as it is also of limited width.
8. However, the majority of the similar forms of extension are positioned alongside dwellings on a consistent building line, meaning that the forward projection or side profile of the extension is not a dominant element of the properties within the street scene. The appeal property is unusual in this regard as No 141 next to it is one of a group set back on a different building line to the majority of properties on this side of the street. Consequently, the side profile of the two storey extension would be much more apparent in the street scene than if the adjacent dwellings were positioned on the same building line.
9. The visible extent and prominence of the side extension would materially reduce the current open aspect between the properties, would be seen as a dominant feature in relation to No 141 and would draw particular attention to the lack of set back from the frontage of the host dwelling in comparison with the majority of other similar extensions nearby. As such, it would represent an incongruous and largely uncharacteristic addition, contrary to the SPD.
10. There is one other visible example of a similar relationship between dwellings at the other end of the set back row of which No 141 is part. No 153 is on the same building line as the appeal property and has a similar form of extension to that proposed here; the neighbouring dwelling, No 151, is similarly set back from it on the same building line as No 141. The alteration to No 153 appears as a dominant and overbearing form of extension within the street scene compared to other similar extensions. It is not clear in what circumstances this was developed and whether it predates current policies or guidance. However, due to its overall effect within the street scene it should not be seen as a positive precedent for the current proposal.
11. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. Consequently, it is contrary to Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the CSDP and to the SPD, as described above.

¹ Paragraphs 5.26 – 5.34.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR