



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2021

by Eleni Randle BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 July 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/21/3272229

21 Axis Court, Woodland Crescent, Greenwich, SE10 9UD

- 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 & Mrs Simon and Judith Hamer against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 21/0176/HD dated 12 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is construction of ground floor single storey extension within garden and construction of second floor single storey extension over existing external terrace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of ground floor single storey extension within garden and construction of second floor single storey extension over existing external terrace at 21 Axis Court, Woodland Crescent, Greenwich, SE10 9UD in accordance with the terms of the application ref: 21/0176/HD, dated 12 January 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years, beginning with the date of this decision;
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the following approved plans: P01 (site location plan), P12 (proposed block plan), P15 (proposed sections), P13 (proposed floor layouts) and P14 (proposed elevations) unless previously agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
 - 3) Unless otherwise agreed in writing the Local Planning Authority the materials used for the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building and shall be maintained as such for the lifetime of the development.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the determination of the application, and the submission of this appeal, a revised National Planning Policy Framework 2021 was adopted on 20 July 2021.
3. Given the main issues for the refusal reason, and the fact the refusal reason does not refer directly to the Framework, it is not considered that this change impacts upon the determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a three-storey semi-detached dwelling located in Axis Court which is comprised of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings of the same design and scale. The site access is via secure gates of Woodland Crescent and is located in an area within two rows of traditional terraced properties. The rear of the appeal site is not visible within public views and is hidden, from Woodland Crescent, by a three-storey block of apartments. There are two elements to the appeal proposal: a single storey rear extension and a second floor rear extension (over existing external terrace).
6. The Council's refusal reason is specific to the second floor rear extension only. The Council's delegated report specifically states that the proposed ground floor rear extension is considered acceptable having regard to the design criteria set out within the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD). I have no evidence before me to conclude differently following my site visit. In that regard, this appeal will focus on the main issue with specific regard to the second floor rear extension.
7. I do not find that the proposal should be assessed as a dormer extension – in architecture a dormer is classed as a vertical window which projects from a sloping roof. That is not the case for the appeal proposal. The proposed second floor rear extension would be within the existing second floor terrace. It would project beyond the existing main elevation by 1.75m, be timber faced to match the existing construction and re-use the existing doors onto the current terrace. I find the combination of these factors would mean that the second floor rear extension would present as modest in both scale and visual impact. I do not find that it would result in harm to the character or appearance of the host property itself. I find that the design respects and harmonises with the host dwelling as well as the architectural style and general character of 21 – 24 inclusive.
8. When I visited I stood in the garden of the appeal site. The height at which the second floor stands, along with the proposed second floor rear extension being set back behind the existing terrace means that I find the proposal would be largely obscured from view from ground level. The main visual impact would be from the side elevation, viewed from within Axis Court and the neighbouring apartment building. Despite this, given the depth, matching materials and its location, within the existing terrace, I do not find that the proposal would result in visual impact that would result in harm to the appearance of the area sufficient to warrant refusal.
9. No. 23 and 24, as a pair, are stepped forward of the appeal site and adjoining no. 22. This notably reduces the visual link between the pairs of properties by reducing visual continuity in the building line – they are not in one clear line. Given this, and my findings with regard to there being no negative impact upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling itself nor the character and appearance of the area, I find the proposal would not result in harm to the pair

of semi-detached properties. I do not find that the design is inappropriate nor that it would erode the established pattern of development.

10. The proposal would be consistent with London Plan 2021 Policy D3 which requires proposals to respond to the existing character of a place, Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies 2014 (LP) Policy DH1 which requires developments to take account of the architecture of surrounding buildings and the quality and nature of materials and LP Policy DH(a) which requires proposals to be of a scale and design appropriate to the building and locality.
11. The proposal would also be consistent with the overarching objectives of the SPD which, with rear extensions, is to ensure that they are in keeping with the size of the original house and not appear bulky to ensure there is little impact on the character of the host property, neighbouring properties and the street scene.

Other Matters

12. I note that there is an objection which appears to be anonymous in that customer details, name and address, are not available which does limit the weight I can apply. I can only assume that the reference to number 8 (and thus a reference to a balcony) is for an apartment in the building to the North West. The Council consider that only no. 22 is relevant for the purposes of consideration of amenity impacts.
13. Given the distance between the apartment building and the appeal site I have no evidence before me to support that the proposal would impact upon light and amenity for units within the neighbouring apartment building. Concern over future developments, or fear of a precedent, is not sufficient to warrant refusal. Each case must be considered on its own merits.

Conditions

14. A time condition is attached to comply with section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A condition requiring the development to be in accordance with the approved plans is required in order to control and define the development which is granted consent. A condition requiring the materials to match the existing building is required to ensure a satisfactory finish and maintain the quality of the proposal for the lifetime of the development.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons outlined above, and taking account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

Eleni Randle

INSPECTOR