



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2021 by S Maur

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/21/3270121

82 Westcombe Park Road, Blackheath SE3 7QS

- 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 Shoheb Miah against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 20/3484/HD, dated 12 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is two flat roofed dormers.
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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.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the development would persevere or enhance the character or appearance of the Blackheath Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is a mid-terrace house located on Westcombe Park Road within the Blackheath Conservation Area. The area includes detached, semi-detached and terrace houses which are setback from the road. The nearby properties have pitched roofs with a simple and pleasant appearance. There have been some extensions at roof level, but typically dormer windows are modest and set well back from the eaves. Planning permission has been granted for 2 dormer windows with pitched roofs. This proposal is for dormers which are similar to the approved scheme but have flat roofs with an overall height similar to the apex of the ridge of the approved dormers. These flat roofed dormers have been constructed and so the appeal has been considered on this basis.
5. The dormers as constructed are similar to the previously approved scheme in terms of positioning in the roof, walling materials and maximum dimensions. However, the flat roofed nature and overall height combine to create bulky additions to the roof with a vertical emphasis. This is at odds with the scale of roof extensions generally found in the locality and they harm the simple form of the roof and character of the dwelling. The Royal Borough of Greenwich Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance (the SPD) advises that the design of dormers should respect the architectural composition of the house with a preference for pitched

roofs where this is in character with the house. Although the dormers comply with some aspects of the advice in the SPD, the development does not accord with its overarching aims.

6. The dormers cannot be seen from the street, however, they are nevertheless visible from a number of nearby properties and so they do impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
7. There are flat roofed dormers on the rear slopes of a number of nearby properties. Even though these do add a degree of bulk to the rear roof slopes, the majority of them are set well back from the eaves with the windowsills close to the roof plain. None have the same vertical emphasis as the dormers at the appeal site. These examples do not mitigate the effect of the appeal development.
8. The development can only be seen from a small part of the Conservation Area and so the degree of harm that has arisen, is less than substantial. However, great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets irrespective of the degree of harm that has arisen. Although the development has resulted in benefits to the appellant, these are private benefits and there are no public benefits sufficient to outweigh the harm.
9. The development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the Blackheath Conservation Area. It would not accord with Policies DH1, DH3, DH(a) and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (July 2014). Together, these Policies seek to ensure high quality development which protects and enhances heritage assets. This includes the need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas and that new roof extensions be designed to respect the scale and character of the host building.
10. The construction of flat roofed, rather than pitched roofed, dormers has allowed for greater useable internal space which has resulted in a benefit for the appellant. However, this is a private benefit which only carries limited weight. It does not outweigh the harm to the Conservation Area. Although the area is not subject to an Article 4 Direction, the relevant policy and legislative requirements for this Conservation Area must still be considered.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. The proposal would not accord with the development plan when considered as a whole. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Maur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Taylor

INSPECTOR