The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2021 by Ms S Maur

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/21/3270140
Site Address: 39 Woolacombe Road, Blackheath, London SE3 8QJ

- 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 Manjit Kailey against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
- The application Ref 20/3518/HD, dated 13 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2021.
- The development proposed is a single storey rear extension.

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 Matters

3. The development was in situ at the time of the site visit and the appeal has therefore been considered on a retrospective basis.

4. The London Plan (2016) has been replaced by the adopted London Plan (2021). Therefore Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2016) is no longer part of the development plan which the appeal decision must be based upon.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the single storey rear extension on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The Appeal dwelling is a two-storey, semi-detached property located on the east side of Woolacombe Road with a hipped roof. The Appeal Site has an existing single storey flat roofed wrap around side/ rear extension. The prevailing character of the immediate and wider site is residential and largely characterised by similar two storey detached and semi-detached mid-century family houses, with generous rear gardens.

7. The proposal is for a single storey rear conservatory attached to the existing single storey wrap around extension and projects beyond this extension. It is made with glass and UPVC and is single storey with a hipped roof to each side.

8. The conservatory extension sits to the rear of the pre-existing flat roofed extension. The juxtaposition of the flat roof next to the pitched and hipped roof conservatory has resulted in an uncomfortable arrangement of roof forms. This has resulted in the conservatory not appearing well integrated with the character of the dwelling as extended. The conservatory now attached to the extension, when considered alongside the existing development significantly increases depth to the host property and is not in accordance with the prevailing character of the wider area.

9. Reference has been made to examples of other extensions in the immediate vicinity, some of which have a depth similar or greater than the proposal. However, none of these extensions appear to have an arrangement of roof forms similar to the appeal scheme and such examples are not so prevalent that it is a significant characteristic of the area. Each case must be considered on its own merits and the examples are not directly comparable to this appeal scheme.

10. The materials match some of those used on the existing building, the roof of the conservatory is not particularly deep, and its form reflects the hipped roof of the main house. However, these factors do not mitigate the effect of the development which is seen in the immediate context of the flat roofed extension. The conservatory is not visible from the highway. However, this factor does not prevent the harm from arising and the extension can be seen from a number of nearby properties.

11. Paragraph 5.18 of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (the SPD) states that planning permission would not usually be granted where the proposal is to add a conservatory to the rear of an existing extension. This part of the SPD is not only related to where a conservatory would impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. In this case the visual effect of the conservatory has resulted in harm to the character of the dwelling and area.

12. For the reasons given above, the development does cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It does not accord with Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) which seeks development with high quality design and to maintain a design which creates a positive relationship with the host building and the surrounding locality. Although the specific criteria in the latter part of Policy DH(a) is not breached, the proposal does not meet the overarching aim of it, as set out at the start of the Policy, which seeks to limit rear additions to a design appropriate to the building and locality. There is also a conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to achieve good design and development which is sympathetic to local character.

Other matters

13. The appellant has suggested that a very similar extension to the proposal could have been erected, as permitted development through the prior approval process for larger home extensions. Two appeal decisions[1], when this matter was taken into account, have been provided. The full circumstances relating to the other appeals are not before me and such matters require consideration of

[1] APP/D1590/D/14/2217517 and APP/P4605/D/14/2215646

the specific circumstances of each case. There is insufficient evidence before me to be clear that a proposal similar to the appeal scheme would meet all of the relevant criteria. Therefore, I give this factor limited weight and it does not outweigh the harm identified.

14. The extension does not have an undue impact on the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings and in this regard would comply with relevant aspects of policy and guidance in the SPD. Also, the extension does not take up more than 50% of the garden or have a harmful effect on the usability of the garden. However, in themself these are neutral matters and they does not minimise the harm identified above.

15. The appeal building is not listed, not located within a conservation area or subject to article 4 directions. However, these matters are not fundamental to the main considerations in this appeal which must be considered against the relevant development plan policies.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ms S Maur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. 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