



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2021 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/21/3267567

102 Woodbrook Road, Plumstead, SE2 0PA

- 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. R. Munden against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 20/3200/HD, dated 19 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension, two storey side extension and single storey front extension incorporating new front porch to facilitate the creation of a granny annex.
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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 Matters

3. In the interest of accuracy, the description of development used in the header above is based on that used on the Council's decision notice.
4. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Accordingly, and in light of the reference made to the previous iteration of the NPPF within the submitted evidence, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the publication. In this respect, I am mindful that neither the appellant nor the Council have made any further submissions regarding the revised NPPF. However, in light of this re-consultation, I am satisfied that any references made to the revised NPPF within this decision would not be unreasonable to the parties.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.
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Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site comprises a two-storey end of terrace dwelling located on the western side of Woodbrook Road within an established residential area. It lies within a triangular plot and adjacent to a water course which runs along its north-western boundary. The appeal dwelling features a single-storey side garage as well as a large side and rear garden. The surrounding area is typified by small blocks of terraced properties with double-storey front bay window projections. The visual gaps between the blocks of terraces contribute a sense of spaciousness to the area.
7. Whilst I accept that the proposed single storey rear extension would be of an acceptable scale and comparable to neighbouring rear extensions, the two-storey side extension would appear excessively bulky given its significant height and width. The roof of the proposed side extension would only be marginally set down lower than the ridge height of the main roof according to the proposed front and side elevation plans. Also, the proposed width would be greater than half the width of the original dwelling. In light of this, the side extension would not appear sufficiently subservient and would overwhelm the host dwelling and would constitute a dominant and incongruous addition.
8. Furthermore, the single storey front extension would add considerable bulk to the dwelling, increasing its prominence in the street scene. Indeed, the combination of the front extension and the proposed two-storey extension would result in a dwelling that would be out of scale with the surrounding context and which would imbalance the terrace within which it is situated. It would also reduce the spaciousness of this end-of-terrace plot resulting in an adverse impact on the open character of the streetscene.
9. I acknowledge No. 78 Woodbrook Road has a similar front extension to what is proposed however No. 78 does not feature a two-storey side extension. It is therefore not directly comparable to the proposal before me where I have considered the cumulative impact. Similarly, my attention has been drawn to other developments in the surrounding area. A number of these properties, such as at Nos. 2, 54, 73 Woodbrook Road, feature two-storey side extensions however these appear to be lower in height than what is proposed and therefore are not comparable to the proposal. The other properties referred to by the appellant do not resemble the appeal property and have not adversely impacted the character and appearance of the area. I have not therefore attributed any significant weight to these references in my decision making.
10. The proposal would therefore harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. In light of this, the development would conflict with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of London Plan, Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) and with the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document which together seek to ensure developments are well-designed, proportional and respect their surrounding contexts.

Other Matters

11. In determining this appeal, I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation,

and to advance equality of opportunity. The appellant has set out the specific needs of the future occupier of the property and the contended justification for the scale of the development. Whilst I sympathise with the appellant's situation with regard to their elderly relative, I am not convinced the significant width of the proposed side extension is necessary to allow for adequate wheelchair manoeuvrability. Even if the width were to be reduced, the roof height of the side extension would still be unacceptably excessive. It is therefore not considered that the evidence put forward by the appellant in support of the need clearly outweighs the permanent harm identified.

12. Furthermore, I note the observation that the Council did not undertake a site visit due to Covid-19 restrictions, and the contention the proposal may not have been properly assessed. Whilst I recognise the appellant's concern in this regard, this has not had a bearing on my own assessment of the scheme and final decision-making which has been based on the planning merits of the scheme.
13. I have had regard to the suggestion that certain elements of the proposal could be completed as permitted development. However, whilst this may be the case, I must consider the cumulative impact of all elements of the proposed development as applied for, and therefore have not attached any significant weight to this contention.

Recommendation

14. The development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. The proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
15. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR