
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 September 2021

by David Fitzsimon MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/21/3274925

1 Rosevine Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8RB

- 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 T Saville against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 21/P0323, dated 16 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is a first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Lambton Road Conservation Area within which it sits.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a traditional end of terrace dwelling in a residential area whose character is broadly defined by similar properties. It sits close to the corner with Pepys Road and the rear of the dwellings on Pepys Road are separated from the side elevation of the host dwelling by their amenity areas. As a result, a physical break in built development exists which means that the side elevation of the host dwelling is readily visible from the public domain.
 4. The appeal dwelling has already been the subject of a single storey extension with a flat roof behind a parapet along with a mansard style loft addition which has altered the traditional end gable profile of the original dwelling. The proposal seeks to add a first floor extension with a flat roof behind a parapet above part of the single storey addition. It would be flush with the flank wall, projecting some two metres from the main rear elevation of the dwelling. Although the proposed addition would be finished in brickwork to match the existing dwelling and would re-align the first floor windows and the windows of the roof addition, it would add significant additional bulk to the side elevation of the dwelling. To my mind, its box-like appearance would not respond well to the traditional character and form of the wider terraced row.
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5. The Council has raised additional concern about the proposed UPVC finish of the window within the proposed extension. However, the Council has permitted the use of heritage UPVC windows within the roof conversion, whilst large modern sliding doors have been installed in the ground floor addition. Against this context, I do not share such concern.
6. Notwithstanding this, for the above reasons, I consider that the proposed first floor extension would be an unsympathetic addition which would not respond well to the scale and proportioning of the host dwelling and that of the terraced row within which it sits. I note the Council's Lambton Road Character Assessment refers to a clear and distinctive architectural rhythm set by the regular repetition of forward facing gables and hips, by projecting bays and by chimneys and parapet walls breaking the roofline. Nevertheless, the visual harm arising from the proposed extension would be widely visible when viewed from the rear amenity spaces of nearby dwellings and certain vantage points to the east given the break in built development that I have described. As such, it would have a harmful impact on an otherwise well ordered street scene and it would detract from the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with policies DM DM2, DM DM3 and DM DM4 of the adopted Merton Sites and Policies Plan and policy CS 14 of the adopted Merton Local Development Framework Core Planning Strategy which collectively promote high quality design which respects, reinforces and enhances its context and which conserves and where appropriate, enhances heritage assets.
7. The harm to the heritage asset would be 'less than substantial' as directed by the Planning Practice Guidance, but I attach considerable importance and weight to the statutory duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework explains that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It goes on to say that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Other considerations, including public benefits

9. The appellant does not suggest that the proposal presents any specific public benefits. The appellant does, however, point to the fact that other first floor extensions are present within the locality. Whilst I do not know the precise planning circumstances behind the examples referred to, none that I could see related to an end of terrace dwelling with a directly comparable setting as the appeal property. In any event, I have considered the appeal proposal on its individual merits, taking into account the particular context within which it would sit.
10. The appellant also argues that the proposed extension would increase the stock of larger dwellings which are in short supply within the Borough. However, this factor, in itself, does not justify an unsympathetic addition.

Overall Conclusions

11. The proposed first floor extension would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and it would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA within which it sits. In such terms, the proposal conflicts with the development plan policies outlined above. The arguments advanced by the appellant do not outweigh this harm and policy conflict therefore the appeal does not succeed.

David Fitzsimon

INSPECTOR