



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 March 2022 by C Glaister BSc (Hons)

Decision by S. Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/22/3291654

49 Fair oak Drive, Eltham SE9 2QG

- 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 Clark Coffield against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 21/3268/HD, dated 6 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a "ground floor rear, first floor part-rear & part-side and roof dormer".
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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 Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and the surrounding area; and
 - the effect of the single-storey rear extension on the living conditions of the occupiers of 47 Fair oak Drive, with regard to light, outlook, and whether or not it would create a sense of enclosure.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

4. 49 Fair oak Drive lies within a well-established residential area comprising a mix of semi-detached and detached houses of a similar scale, some of which have been extended. Nos 47 and 49 Fair oak Drive are two halves of a semi-detached pair. They are largely symmetrical with one another when viewed from the street, except for a dormer of limited scale on the side of No 47 which is set away from the ridge, eaves, and hip of the roof. The symmetry of the pair makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the properties and the wider street scene.

5. The development would extend the ridge of the roof, and increase the width of the property at first-floor and roof level. The property would also be extended at the rear, including a two-storey element, single-storey element, and dormer.
6. The Royal Borough of Greenwich Supplementary Planning Document Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance (December 2018) (SPD) suggests that the ridge height of a side extension should be set below the existing ridge height to ensure the extension is secondary to the original house. In addition, the SPD requires that side extensions are less than half the width of the main house and that two-storey rear and first-floor rear extensions need to be in keeping with the size of the original house and not appear bulky.
7. The development, which would incorporate a bulky and complicated roof form, would alter the main profile of the property. Moreover, it would fail to be subservient to the original dwelling and would create an imbalance in the core symmetry of the semi-detached pair. In addition to that, the side extension together with the development at the rear, by virtue of their combined size and massing, would fail to respect the original form of the property and, as a whole, the development would appear excessive. The alterations to the roof and to the side of the property would be visible from the street. The development would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and the surrounding area. For these reasons, the proposal would not comply with the advice in the SPD as set out above.
8. No 55 Fair Oak Drive is one half of another semi-detached pair which closely resembles Nos 47 and 49. No 55 has a side extension that is set well below the ridge of the original house. It is also set a considerable distance back from the front elevation and is not therefore directly comparable to the proposal before me. In general, where a property in the area has been extended, the principal ridge of the roof has remained unaltered. The side extensions nearby that have been identified by the appellant do not extend the ridge of the roof. They are therefore materially different from the proposal, and do not mitigate the harm that would arise from the development.
9. The appellant indicates that the property could be altered under permitted development rights. Be that as it may, limited information has been provided in this regard and I cannot therefore compare the impact of any proposal under permitted development with the appeal scheme. Accordingly, the fallback position has limited weight, and this would not outweigh the harm identified.
10. I acknowledge that the single-storey element of the development would be largely obscured from public views and would not therefore cause harm, in itself, to the character and appearance of the area. Whilst I have considered issuing a split decision, this element of the proposal is not distinctly severable from the rest of the proposal, and the development as a whole, including at ground-floor level, would nevertheless result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
11. For these reasons, the development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and the surrounding area. It would therefore fail to comply with Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (July 2014) (CS) or Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) which together seek to ensure: development achieves a high quality of design; proposals for rear, side and other additions are limited to a scale and

design appropriate to the building and locality; and development responds to the existing character of a place.

Living Conditions

12. There is a conservatory at the rear of the property that is located towards the boundary with No 47. The southern wall of the conservatory features much less glazing than the rest of the structure. The single-storey extension proposed would have a similar depth to the conservatory, and would be taller. It would have a flat roof, and would not feature any glazing on its southern elevation. No 47 also has a single-storey rear extension located towards its southern side.
13. The SPD suggests that extensions should not overshadow neighbouring habitable rooms or private gardens to result in an un-neighbourly sense of enclosure, nor should it reduce the amount of daylight they receive. It also suggests that if a proposal would mean that the immediate outlook from a neighbour's windows would become unsightly or appear overbearing from the neighbouring property or street it would normally be refused.
14. The proposal would present a solid wall adjacent to the boundary with No 47. However, given its orientation, its limited additional height and similar depth, it would not cause a significant increase in overshadowing. Similarly, the outlook available from the closest rear door would only be restricted to a limited degree by the extension. Other windows and doors, the rooms within the property and the garden would not be significantly affected. Accordingly, whilst there might be some increase in the sense of enclosure to the side, the living conditions of the property as a whole would not be unduly affected.
15. I acknowledge the concerns of the neighbour regarding the two-storey element of the proposal. That element would be sited further back from the common boundary and as such, whilst it may be visible, it is unlikely to be unduly overbearing or cause a loss of light or significant harm to outlook from the property. As such, the development would adhere to the guidance provided in the SPD, insofar as it relates to living conditions.
16. For these reasons, proposal would not unduly harm the living conditions of the occupiers of 47 Fair Oak Drive, with regard to light, outlook, or enclosure. It would therefore comply with Policy DH(b) of the CS which seeks to ensure extensions do not cause an unacceptable loss of amenity to adjacent occupiers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. Although no harm has been found with regard to living conditions, this would not mitigate or outweigh the harm that would arise to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Glaister

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR