The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19th May 2022

by Megan Thomas Q.C. Barrister-at-Law

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/22/3296438
59 Calvert Road, Greenwich SE10 0DH

- 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 Fraser Brown against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
- The application Ref.21/4526/HD, dated 21 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2022.
- The development proposed is a single storey ground floor side infill extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in the appeal are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area, and the effect on the living conditions of the occupants of no.57 Calvert Road in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling and is situated on the north side of Calvert Road just before it turns northwards. The rear gardens of nos 61 to 67 Calvert Road back onto the eastern side of the plot of no.59. No.57 Calvert Road is the terraced house immediately to the west of the appeal site.

4. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with a mix of terraced houses and mid-rise blocks of flats.

5. The appeal property has a rear outrigger on its eastern side. It has a dormer structure from the rear of the main roof matching the depth of the outrigger with a flat roof, and a large window with juliette balcony facing the rear garden. Outriggers are a characteristic of the terraced houses in the immediate area.

6. The proposal is to construct a single storey rear extension on the west side of the property to infill the area between the common boundary with no.57 and the existing outrigger. The extension would be about 5.7m deep, about 2.1m wide and about 3m high. It would have a flat roof and skylights and no windows in its western elevation. It would not be deeper than the outrigger.

7. The existing kitchen is on the ground floor of the outrigger and there are a couple of steps from the external kitchen door down to the area proposed to be infilled. The proposed eaves of the flat roof would be no higher than 3000mm from original ground level.

8. In this case, the loft extension has provided a third storey of accommodation to the outrigger with a long flat roof to that dormer structure from the main roof. The proposed infill extension would add significant bulk and mass to the rear of the property. It would further obscure the modest original character of the host building and its distinctive outrigger. The resulting cumulative development with its broadly rectangular footprint would detract from the legibility of the original dwelling and it would no longer remain sufficiently prominent contrary to the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (2018). Even though views would generally be from private land, the plot would look overdeveloped with dominant rear elements resulting in a squeezed-in, poorly-designed appearance.

9. On this issue, I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area and would be contrary to policy D3 of the London Plan (2021), policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) and the Royal Greenwich Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2018).

Living conditions of Occupants of No.57 Calvert Road

10. No.57 Calvert Road is directly to the west of the appeal site and there is boundary treatment separating the two properties. Its rear outrigger is on the western side of its plot. The proposal would result in a wall along the common boundary with no.57 which would be about 3m high and about 5.7m in length. This would create a tunnel-like effect along with the outrigger and part of the main rear elevation of no.57, with that part of the rear amenity land of no.57 being enclosed. The impact would be significantly more harmful than the impact of the boundary treatment between the two properties.

11. The overbearing effect would be exacerbated by the three storeys of accommodation in the outrigger at the appeal site. I acknowledge that the area of amenity land affected at no.57 does not receive generous daylight or sunlight at present but nevertheless the sense of enclosure when using that part of the rear of no.57's plot would be acute and overbearing.

12. Whilst the existing occupants of no.57 Calvert Road have not objected to the proposal, I am obliged to consider the impact of the proposal on the housing stock objectively which involves considering the living conditions for future occupants of neighbouring properties in addition to current incumbents.

13. Whilst I have borne in mind that there are examples of other rear extensions adjacent to outriggers on other terraced properties in the area which have resulted in a similar relationship with its neighbouring terraced house, I have determined this appeal on the individual merits of the proposal at no.59 Calvert Road, as I am obliged to do. Whilst the appellant refers to and produces an application for prior approval for a very similar ground floor rear extension at the appeal site, there is nothing before me to demonstrate that it has been determined favourably.

14. On the second main issue, I conclude that the proposal would unduly harm the living conditions of the occupants of no.57 Calvert Road in respect of outlook and enclosure. It would be contrary to policy DH(b) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) and the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2018).

Conclusion

15. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I dismiss the appeal.

Megan Thomas Q.C.

INSPECTOR