



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 March 2023

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/22/3311409

15 Papillons Walk Greenwich, Blackheath, London SE3 9SF

- 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 Martin Holder against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 22/2280/HD, dated 5 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "*Retention of a single storey rear extension (with render finish painted to match existing yellow/terracotta brickwork colour and RAL 7031 blue/ grey aluminium doors and windows)*"
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Blackheath Park Conservation Area (BPCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey detached house. It forms part of the Papillons Walk Estate, a late 20th century cluster of closely-spaced houses interspersed by alleyways and landscaping. The area is notable for the uniform appearance of the properties, which are built using the same small palette of materials, most notably yellow brick and brown-framed windows. The combined effect of the uniformity and landscaping results in a high-quality residential environment that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the BPCA.
4. In May 2021 a Lawful Development Certificate (ref: 21/0999/CP) was issued by the Council confirming that a single-storey extension constructed of brick to match the existing and incorporating brown powder-coated aluminium-framed doors was permitted development by virtue of Schedule 1, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. A single-storey rear extension has since been constructed that does not accord with the requirements of the Order, which explicitly states that materials used in any exterior work must be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing dwellinghouse.

5. The extension has been constructed with a brick-faced wall along the side boundary whilst the garden-facing elevations currently comprise blockwork. As the scheme does not accord with the Order, planning permission has been sought for a single-storey rear extension that would have a rendered finish on the garden elevation and blue/grey coloured door frames. As there is a clear fall-back position, namely an extension erected in accordance with the Order, the only matter requiring consideration is the proposed materials.
6. It is proposed that the garden elevations would be rendered and painted a colour to match the existing brickwork. As the brickwork used in the host property and surrounding houses does not have a single consistent colour, and includes mortar joints and relief, there would be inevitable contrast between the existing and proposed materials. I recognise that in some contexts having a contrast between old and new elements is a valid design approach. However, in this instance, where brick is such a dominant and prevailing material, I do not consider this to be desirable or appropriate. I note that sourcing brickwork that precisely matches the existing may be difficult but there is no evidence before me to suggest that adequate replication cannot be achieved, particularly given any differences between old and new brickwork would be lessened over time through weathering.
7. I note that the rear extension is largely screened from view from the neighbouring alleyway largely due to the installation of timber fencing on top of the boundary walls. However, the long-term retention of the fencing cannot be secured and in any event the rear of the appeal property is visible from surrounding properties. Reference has been made to nearby properties with painted render. In my view these properties illustrate the harm that can result to the appearance of this area if materials divert from the prevailing palette. In any event, each planning application and appeal needs to be considered on its individual merits.
8. The proposal also includes the installation of glazed doors in the extension together with the replacement of the existing rear ground floor window. It is intended that these would all have blue/grey powder-coated aluminium frames. This would be at odds with the brown window frames that proliferate in the area. Together with the painted render, the window frames would result in an extension that would be an incongruous element in the context of the highly uniform appearance of the estate.
9. For these reasons I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the appearance of host property and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the BPCA. As such it fails to accord with Policies DH1, DH3, DH(a) and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan, Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) which seek development that pays special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. There is also conflict with the aims of Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), the Blackheath Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2013), and the Council's Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2018).
10. Whilst the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the BPCA, the harm to this heritage asset would be less than substantial. In these circumstances Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires me to weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. As

the proposal would provide additional private living accommodation there are no public benefits associated with it.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole

INSPECTOR