



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2023

by C Carpenter BA MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/22/3308599

49 Fairoak 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 Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 22/2303/HD, dated 7 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a part 1, part 2 storey rear and side extension and alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two-storey semi-detached house of traditional appearance. It has a tiled, hipped roof with a steep pitch. The property has a small, single-storey gabled projection with a similar pitch as the main roof, so that the property has a long, continuous slope down from the ridge of the roof to the top of the ground floor windows. Front and side views of this distinctive feature can be seen from the street.
4. There is a marked symmetry with No 47 Fairoak Drive. This is reinforced by the matching sloped roof and single-storey gabled projection. There are also some differences between the two houses when viewed from the street. However, these do not detract significantly from the overall symmetrical appearance. Fairoak Drive extends around three sides of a central green space. These sides are laid out with semi-detached and detached houses of varying designs but similar proportions to Nos 49 and 47. Some of the semi-detached pairs are of the same design as that of the appeal site and its partner, including Nos 55 and 57 nearby. The presence of these distinctive, symmetrical pairs contributes to the character of the surrounding area.
5. When viewed from the front, the two-storey element of the proposed extension would be set down from the ridge of the roof, similar to the dormer at No 47. It would also involve the creation of a new, two-storey element visible above the single-story projection, set a very limited amount back from the first-floor front elevation. This new element would make the extension dominant relative to the

distinctive long slope of the roof. Thus, although the extension would be less than half the width of the host property when viewed from the front, its limited setback from the front elevation would result in a significant and harmful change to the symmetry of the semi-detached pair.

6. The extent and bulk of the proposed extension, along with its very limited set back, would also harm the distinctive, continuous slope when viewed from the side. The slope would be replaced by a prominent two-storey wall and eaves line that would extend well back beyond the rear of the house. As a result, the extension would not be subordinate to the main house from the side because it would appear bulky and change the overall shape of the house to the detriment of the street scene. These harmful changes to the front and side views of the host property would in turn detract from its contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. I note the earlier appeal decision¹ for this site and the differences in design between that scheme and this one. In particular, the height of this proposal would be set down from the existing ridge, the overall roof form would be somewhat simpler, and the width of the extension at the rear would be reduced. However, the extension would be set further forward than the previous appeal scheme. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, these changes do not fully overcome the harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area identified by the previous Inspector.
8. The Council is satisfied with the proposed single-storey element of the extension, fenestration, and use of matching materials. I see no reason to disagree on these points. I also note the roof pitch of the side extension would reflect that of the original house when viewed from the front. However, these aspects of the proposal do not overcome my concern about the overall size and dominance of the extension.
9. I have considered the existing two-storey extension at No 55. This is wider than that proposed on the appeal site and extends out beyond the end of the ground-floor gabled protrusion. Nonetheless, it is set much further down from the ridge of the roof and much further back from its hip. It is also set a considerable distance back from the single storey projecting gable to the front. As a result, it appears subordinate to the distinctive long roof slope, which can still be appreciated from both the front and side of the house. For these reasons, I consider the proposal is not comparable with the extension at No 55.
10. I note several other houses in the area have been extended. However, the circumstances – including the characteristics of the host property and the design of the extension – are different in each case. Therefore, these other examples are not directly comparable with the appeal proposal. I have considered the appeal scheme on its merits.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. This is contrary to Policy D3 of the London Plan; Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies; and the Royal Borough of Greenwich Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document. These policies require design that responds positively to local distinctiveness and the character of the area;

¹ Reference APP/E5330/D/22/3291654

and that extensions respect the scale and character of the host building, remaining secondary in size and appearance. It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires high quality design that is sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

12. The Council is satisfied there would be no harm to the living conditions of neighbours, and I see no reason to disagree. However, compliance with the development plan in this respect is a neutral matter.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, I conclude the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

C Carpenter

INSPECTOR