



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2023

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/23/3317029

61 Calvert Road, Greenwich, SE10 0DG

- 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 Sean McGrath against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 22/3291/HD, dated 2 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2022.
 - The development proposed was described as '*The removal of the existing chimney and consequent realignment of the hip roof, and a minor extension to the kitchen*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of a single-storey rear extension, removal of chimney and enlargement of roof at 61 Calvert Road, Greenwich, SE10 0DG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/3291/HD, dated 2 October 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drg Nos 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07 and 09.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description I have used in my formal decision reflects that which was given by the Council on their decision notice and which was repeated by the appellant on the appeal form. This gives a better all-round description of the proposed development rather than that which was given on the application form and which I have quoted in the banner heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, end of terrace dwelling with a hipped roof. It occupies a corner location with its principal, symmetrical elevation set 90-degrees to the remainder of the terrace due to the sharp turn in Calvert Road at this point. This arrangement gives No 61 a fairly unique appearance amongst its immediately adjoining contemporaries, but which sits comfortable within the wider setting of this established residential neighbourhood which displays some modern additions in places, creating a pleasing balance between old, new and the slightly different. The appeal proposal includes a single-storey rear extension, and a change to the roof's profile with an increase to the height and length of the ridge line, and a rise to the angle of the roof slope.
5. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed single-storey rear extension. I agree that it would be a modest addition that would have little impact upon the appearance of the dwelling.
6. I note that the proposed roof alterations follow on from two previous proposals for changes to the dwelling at this level. In both instances the planning applications (Refs 18/2731/HD and 21/0012/HD) were refused permission and subsequent appeals (Refs APP/E5330/D/18/3219202 and APP/E5330/D/21/3275612) were dismissed. In both cases the proposals involved a hip to gable change, with the Inspectors in agreement that the loss of spaciousness created by the existing hipped roof arrangement, and the resulting dominance of the proposed gable within the street scene, would be inappropriate.
7. I understand the previous Inspectors' concerns. However, the current appeal proposal differs markedly from those that went before. The building would retain its hipped roof, albeit in a different form. A suggestion by the Council that the proposal would result in a 'steep hipped end' is to my mind an over-exaggeration. The roof pitch would undeniably change, but to an angle of slope that would not be unconventional. Neither would it be out of keeping with the pitch of some roofs locally. The roof as a whole would be proportionate to the dwelling thereby avoiding any sense of appearing 'top-heavy' or incongruous. When seen from the west, where the principal elevation is openly viewed, the building would retain its symmetry and important sense of space, whilst also continuing to reflect the front roof slopes of adjoining properties.
8. The increased step change in ridge height between Nos 61 and 63 would not be uncharacteristic for Calvert Road. The topography of the area is such that firebreak walls on the roofs between attached properties vary considerably in size from property to property. An obvious but not isolated example is directly opposite the appeal site at No 62 which sits much higher than its attached neighbour at No 64, with a tall firebreak wall along the common boundary. There is a marked difference between the roof configurations of these attached properties but given the established character of the area, nothing appears out of place or incongruous. The changes at No 61 would be a similar reflection of this. The increased height of the firebreak wall between the appeal property and No 63 would not be uncharacteristic and would signify a clear distinction between the different roof forms that would result, which would simply further mark the unique form of No 61 and add subtly to the existing mix along Calvert Road where different buildings, even when attached, harmonise.

9. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed roof alterations would not dramatically alter the appearance of No 61 and that the changes would be sympathetic without harm to the character or appearance of the wider street scene. I therefore find no conflict with the aims or objectives of the Council's *Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2018* where it deals with roof extensions/loft conversions. Neither do I find conflict with Policies DH1 or DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies 2014 or Policy D3 of The London Plan 2021 insofar as they require new development, including residential extensions, to achieve high quality design that responds positively to local context through, amongst other things, respect for the scale and appearance of a host building and established development pattern. For the same reasons, I find no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Conditions

10. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. In the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to ensure that the proposal is finished with materials to match the existing.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of 61 Calvert Road, or the wider street scene. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR