



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2024

by N Perrins BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/23/3333659

56 Horn Park Lane, Eltham, Greenwich SE12 8AR

- 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 John Penfold against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref: 23/2252/HD, dated 5 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 31 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is construction of a part 1, part 2 storey side and rear wrap around extension and associated external works and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of a part 1, part 2 storey side and rear wrap around extension and associated external works and alterations at 56 Horn Park Lane, Eltham, Greenwich SE12 8AR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 23/2252/HD dated 5 July 2023 and 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 (i) Site Location Plan, (ii) Proposed Block Plan Drawing No: 420_P1_101, (iii) Proposed Ground Floor Plan Drawing No: 420_P1_101, (iv) Proposed First Floor Plan Drawing No: 420_P1_102, (v) Proposed Roof Plan Drawing No: 420_P1_104, (vi) Proposed Front Elevation Drawing No: 420_P1_105, (vii) Proposed Rear Elevation Drawing No: 420_P1_106, (viii) Proposed Side Elevation Drawing No: 420_P1_107, (ix) Proposed Side Elevation Drawing No: 420_P1_108, and (x) Proposed Section A-A Drawing No: 420_P1_109.
 - 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 Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023 but there are no material changes relevant to the main issue for this appeal.

3. The Council's decision notice refers to its Residential Extensions, Conversions and Basements Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2018), which has since been superseded by its Urban Design SPD (2023). I have been provided copy of an extract from the Urban Design SPD (2023) and refer to this where relevant in this decision.
4. I have used the description of development as set out on the Council's decision notice, rather than the one on the planning application form, as this more accurately describes the proposal. I note the appellant's grounds of appeal confirm they do not object to the Council's description of development.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling located within the Horn Park Estate. The character of the area is residential with most properties being detached dwellings. The area is characterised by houses laid out in straight lines fronting, but set back from, the road. Many dwellings in the area have been altered over the years with side and other extensions.
7. The appeal proposal would include a side extension that would be part single storey in the front section with a first floor addition to the rear section. The ground floor side extension part would be set back around 300mm and the first floor part set back around 5.1m from the front elevation. The rear section would wrap around and connect to a proposed rear extension that would project around 4.8m from the existing dwelling at ground floor level. The ground floor rear extension would incorporate a first floor extension within the central part of the rear elevation with a depth of around 2.1m. A gap of around 1m would be retained along the side boundary.
8. With regard to the side extension, I agree with the Council that the nearby extensions at No 46 and No 66 are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal as they are larger and bulkier than the appeal proposal. In contrast, the proposed use of setbacks at both ground and first floor as well as a lower roof height than the existing ridge would ensure the side extension would appear as secondary to the host dwelling. It would not appear as overly large or incongruous within the street scene. The design approach used is also consistent with other more similar extensions that have been constructed within the wider area, which demonstrate that suitably proportioned and designed side extensions, such as that proposed here, can integrate successfully with host properties without causing harm to the character of the area.
9. Accordingly, the proposal is consistent with the advice in the Council's recently adopted Urban Design SPD for side extensions, in that it would appear secondary to the host dwelling. I note, conversely, the proposal does not meet the SPD's advice for the extension to be set back by 500mm. However, in view of the successful and sympathetic integration that would be achieved with the dwelling, I am satisfied that this conflict with the guidance in the SPD is insufficient to justify refusing planning permission.

10. In terms of terracing, the 1m gap to the boundary combined with the significant setback at first floor level would mean that the proposal would retain an appropriate appearance of spacing between properties within the street scene. I find, therefore, that whilst the building would be brought closer to the adjacent boundary a sufficient gap would remain to avoid any uncharacteristic terracing effect. I further note that the SPD suggests a gap of 1.2m should be retained to boundaries for access walkways where this is an established feature of the area. There are numerous examples where properties do not have access walkways in the area. Without detailed evidence to the contrary, I am not persuaded this is an important or established character feature that this part of the SPD advice applies to in this case.
11. Overall, I am satisfied that the design, scale, bulk and mass of the proposal would be acceptable and would not be out of keeping with the dwelling or area. The proposal would comprise high-quality design, sympathetic to local character and appearance.
12. With regard to the rear extension, it would extend at ground level to approximately the same depth as what has been constructed on the adjacent property at No. 54. The first floor part of the extension would not extend as far as the ground floor aspect and would not extend to the full width of the existing property, which means that it would appear as a secondary feature and not over-dominate the rear elevation.
13. The appeal plot is also relatively large and able to accommodate the proposed rear extension without it appearing as overly dominant within its site, to the host property or in its relationship with neighbouring properties. I am satisfied, therefore, that the rear extension would be acceptable in terms of its scale, bulk, mass and overall design to be able to assimilate with the host dwelling without causing harm to the character and appearance of the area.
14. For the reasons set out above, the proposed extensions have been designed to appear as secondary to the host building and would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area. Accordingly, the proposal is consistent with Policy D3 (*optimising site capacity through the design-led approach*) of the London Plan (2021) and Policies DH1 (*design*) and DH(a) (*residential extensions*) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014). Whilst there would be minor conflict with guidance within the Council's Urban Design SPD (2023), the overall design would remain secondary to the host dwelling in accordance with the key principle of the SPD.
15. The proposal would also be consistent with paragraph 135 of the Framework and the National Design Guide, which seek to ensure that developments have a high standard of design appropriate to their site and surrounds.

Conditions

16. I have included the Council's suggested conditions, which I agree are necessary to ensure there is clarity over the development approved. These include both the standard time limit condition and a condition to specify the approved plans. It is also necessary to include a condition requiring that the development is constructed using materials that match those used on the existing building to ensure the development will safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, the proposal is consistent with the policies of the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the SPD, which indicate planning permission should be refused. I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR