



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: 03 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/24/3336564

1 Birdbrook Road, Kidbrooke, Greenwich SE3 9QA

- 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 Keir against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref: 23/2790/HD, dated 23 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 18 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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Extensions, Conversions and Basements Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2018), which has since been superseded by its Urban Design SPD (2023).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 with the Urban Design SPD (2023) and refer to this where relevant in this decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is an end of terrace two-storey dwelling corner plot that fronts Birdbrook Road. Adjacent to the site is a grassed area that then turns the corner into Ridgebrook Road. To the side of the appeal dwelling, where the development would be located, is a side passage, a detached garage and an irregular shaped garden area. The prevailing character of the area is residential with terraced and semi-detached dwellings. The character of corner plots in the area is varied with some being open and others containing small single-storey structures.
6. The proposal is for a single storey side extension with an irregular footprint and roof form. It would have a flat roof with a false pitch to the front and a pitch to

the rear, giving the design a contemporary style. A side passage to the rear of the property would be retained around the perimeter of the proposed extension.

7. At its maximum width the proposal would be more than half the width of the existing dwelling. The Council refers to the proposed set back as measuring 300mm and no alternative measurements have been provided. The resultant effect of this would be the development appearing as overly prominent, and out of proportion with the host dwelling within the Birdbrook Road street scene. This is in contrast to other development to the side of properties in the nearby vicinity, which are characterised as generally being smaller and subservient in size to their host dwellings.
8. The irregular shape of the site would result in some of the additional width being set back from the street scene along Birdbrook Road. There would be a clear distinction between public and private space, and a separation gap between the extension and plot boundaries. However, the proposal would be higher than the site's boundary treatment and, therefore, remain a highly visible and discordant addition to the dwelling even with it stepping back into the plot. Moreover, the site being a corner plot, the proposal would also be highly visible from the area around the entrance to Ridgebrook Road. The appeal proposal would be very conspicuous from this direction.
9. The visual harm would be exacerbated by the raised roof to the rear of the extension. The partially raised roof would appear as an incongruous addition that is not consistent or in keeping with other side extensions or outbuildings in the nearby area. The use of timber cladding on the rear elevated section would also cause harm in this regard as it would create a discordant and jarring overall development which would not integrate well with the design of the host dwelling. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant's contention that the built form would be innovative and a departure from the norm, I do not agree that it is the appropriate design response in this case with regard to the impact it would have on the character and appearance of the dwelling and area. This is because it would not be sympathetic to either, and would not therefore comprise high-quality design with regard to its context.
10. The set back and width of the proposal would contravene the Council's guidance in its Urban Design SPD, which seeks to ensure side extensions are set back 500mm and have a width no greater than half of the width of the host dwelling. The reason for this guidance is in recognition that side extensions can have a much greater impact on street scape than rear extensions. The SPD advises that side extensions must appear as secondary in scale in relation to the host dwelling. This would not be achieved in this case on account of the width, height and design of the proposal.
11. I have had regard to the examples of other developments on corner plots provided by the appellant. Whilst there are examples of outbuildings on corner plots these are generally flat roofed and/or not as wide as the appeal proposal. There are also examples of much larger extensions, but these generally respect the scale, design, and layouts of their host buildings and plots. These examples are, therefore, not directly comparable as they are not as prominent in their appearance or impact on the character of the area as would be the case with the appeal proposal.

12. I have been referred to planning permission approved by the Council for new housing developments on the Brooks Estate, where it is claimed houses of scales, styles and materials different to those of the local area have been permitted. I have not been provided with the full details of those, but every case must be judged on its merits. In this particular case I have found the scale, design and materials proposed would not be sympathetic to the host dwelling and area, and the other developments referred to do not convince me the proposal would otherwise be acceptable.
13. I have sympathy with the appellant's needs for additional space, the irregular shape of the plot, as well as their frustrations experienced with the planning process. However, these do not justify the harm I have identified above.
14. The appeal proposal would dominate its plot and would not appear as a secondary feature to the dwelling due to its excessive scale, height and width, and the use of timber cladding on its rear elevation. It would therefore harm the character and appearance of the host property and area, contrary to 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). These seek to enhance local context, and ensure development respects the scale and character of the host building, the street scene and the surrounding area, amongst other things. The proposal is also inconsistent with the advice within the Council's Urban Design Guidance SPD and Paragraph 135 of the Framework, which requires development to be sympathetic to local character.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole, due to its impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area and there are no material considerations that would lead me to a different conclusion. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR