

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 April 2024

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/24/3337629

27 Packmores Road, Eltham, London SE9 2NB

- 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 Stephen Williams against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 23/3321/HD, dated 12 October 2023, was refused by notice dated 7 December 2023.
 - The development proposed is for a two storey side extension with single storey extension to rear and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension with single storey extension to rear and loft conversion at 27 Packmores Road, Eltham, London SE9 2NB, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 23/3321/HD, dated 12 October 2023 subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: D001, D002, D004, D005a, D005.1, D006, D007a and D008.
 3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') was published in December 2023, but there are no material changes relevant to the substance of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling comprises a semi-detached dwellinghouse located within a cul-de-sac of Packmores Road. A number of houses within the locality have been extended, including through the addition of dormers at roof level; indeed quite substantial flat roof dormers are visible from within the rear garden of the appeal property at nos 25, 29 and 31 Packmores Road with the dormer on the former property being the full width i.e. across the roof of the original dwelling and its side extension.
5. Consequently, I consider that such additions constitute part of the character of the locality and whilst in itself the dormer would be substantial, I consider that it would be difficult to demonstrate harm bearing in mind: a) a similar one has been constructed in fairly recent times next door; and b) the fact that the dormer is located beyond the public realm, with mature trees to the north-west, north and north-east largely screening the scheme from neighbouring dwellings beyond.
6. I note that the Council stated that a site visit had not been undertaken as part of the assessment of the planning application, however I am not convinced that a full assessment could be undertaken without a physical site visit taking place i.e. without seeing the site and its surroundings 'in the flesh' so to speak. I also note the third party concern with regard to the fact that the proposal is for a full width dormer, but nonetheless as demonstrated within the appeal submissions such features are not uncommon within the locality the site finds itself situated within.
7. The Council's Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) stipulates that a roof extension should generally follow and complement the pattern and pitch of the main roof, and should be secondary in scale to the main roof, seeking to preserve or enhance the existing appearance in terms of height, scale and visual interest. However this is one material consideration that must be weighed within the planning balance, including that of the site's physical built context which I consider, in this instance, outweighs the SPD's advice that full width, box type dormer extensions should be discouraged.
8. I therefore find, on balance, that the proposed dormer by reason of its design, scale and width would not result in an unsympathetic, incongruous or overly dominant addition to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal complies with the Council's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2023, Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) and Policies DH1 and DH (a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (July 2014) which together require all developments to make the best use of land by following a design-led approach and optimises the capacity of sites, ensuring that all developments are of a high quality of design by providing a positive relationship between the proposed and existing urban context, and requiring for proposals for residential extensions to be limited to a scale and design appropriate to the building and locality.

Conclusion and Conditions

9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.
10. Other than the standard time limit condition, the Council has suggested a condition requiring external materials to be used in the construction of the extension to match those of the existing building, and that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. I consider these conditions necessary in the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the area.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR