



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2024

by Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9TH September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/24/3339786

179 Plumstead Common Road, Plumstead, Greenwich SE18 2UJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Y Schwartz against the decision of The Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/3508/F.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a ground floor extension together with replacement of rear door with window on the rear elevation and a rear roof extension including two rooflights to facilitate the conversion of an existing C3 family dwellinghouse to a 6-bed HMO C4 up to 6 occupants together with cycle and refuse storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a ground floor extension together with replacement of rear door with window on the rear elevation and a rear roof extension including two rooflights to facilitate the conversion of an existing C3 family dwellinghouse to a 6-bed HMO C4 up to 6 occupants together with cycle and refuse storage at 179 Plumstead Common Road, Plumstead, Greenwich SE18 2UJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/3508/F, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the Council's decision notice differs from that on the application form. As there does not appear to be an agreement to change the description, I have used the description on the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and the character of the Plumstead Common Conservation Area. (the CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling is a two storey late 19th Century mid terrace house on a side of the street occupied by similar terraced houses and shops. On the opposite side of the street is a petrol station and a public house. It is located within the boundary of the CA, the significance of which is focused on the ancient common and surrounding Victorian buildings.

5. In line with the duty imposed on me by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
6. The proposal includes a single storey extension to the rear of the appeal dwelling that replaces the shed at the rear of the two storey outrigger. From my site visit it is evident that this part of the proposal has been substantially completed. However, those parts of the proposal that include the change of a rear door to a window, rear dormer roof extension and roof lights to the front roof slope have not been implemented.
7. The proposed pitched roof rear dormer extension would sit within the rear roof slope of the main roof of the appeal dwelling. It would be tile clad and hipped, into the existing roof slope. The two windows in the rear of the proposed dormer extension would closely match the proportions and design of existing windows in the rear of the appeal dwelling. The roof ridge of the proposed dormer extension would be set down from the main roof ridge and up from the eaves and set well in from the party wall upstands.
8. The extent of the set down of the ridge of the proposed dormer from the roof ridge of the main house and its setting up from the eaves does not accord with the design guidance given in the Royal Borough of Greenwich Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (the SPD), which advises in Paragraph i.66 that dormer extensions be set 0.5 metres in from the roof ridge. The set in of the proposed dormer from the party walls does meet the advised distance of 0.5 metres from the party walls.
9. Whilst the ridge of the proposed dormer would not be set as far as 0.5 metres from the ridge of the main roof of the appeal dwelling, its pitched form would result in the sides of the proposed dormer being set in excess of 0.5 metres. Whilst the proposal would not fully accord with the guidance for distances of dormers to roof edges set out in the SPD, this is design guidance that should be applied to the individual proposal and context. I find that in this instance the design, width and height of the proposed dormer extension and distances to the edges of the roof are sufficient for it to appear as a secondary and subservient addition to the appeal dwelling. As such I do not find that the scale of the proposed dormer would result in a dominant and incongruous addition that would overwhelm the rear roof slope.
10. The proposed dormer would be seen from the gardens of neighbouring properties and houses on Wernbrook Street that back on to the appeal dwelling. In these views the proposal would be seen in conjunction with the pitched roofs of the two storey outriggers to houses in the terrace of which the appeal dwelling forms part. As such the proposed dormer extension would integrate with the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and that of the terrace of which it forms part.
11. Within the context of the rear of the property and the two storey outriggers with pitched roofs, the proposal would have little visual presence and would reflect the roofscape of the local area. As such the proposed dormer extension would integrate with the character and appearance of the local area, thereby preserving the character and appearance of the CA.

12. The Council has concluded that the proposed rear ground floor extension, door to window change in the rear elevation and the roof lights in the front roof slope would not have any detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the CA. I see no reason to demur from this conclusion. For these reasons, I find that the proposed development as a whole does not result in any significant harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling or the terrace of which it forms part, and preserves the character and appearance of the CA, resulting in no harm to its significance.
13. Therefore, the development accords with Policies DH1, DH3, and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014), Policy D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (the Framework). These collectively seek development, including extensions, that is of high design quality, responds to site context and integrates with the local area, has due regard to the importance of preserving or enhancing heritage assets and does not undermine the quality of life of neighbouring residential occupiers.

Conditions

14. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council should I be minded to allow this appeal. I have not included the condition requiring the relating to the HMO (C4 use) that would limit its occupancy to 4 persons, as the facilities provided would be suitable for occupancy by 6 persons as applied for. Such a condition would not be necessary and would not meet the requirements for conditions set out in Government's Planning Practice Guidance or the Framework.
15. As the development that is the subject of this appeal has commenced, I have not included the condition for the time limit on implementation of the development. In the interests of design quality, I have attached conditions requiring compliance with approved plans and materials that match those of the existing building. I have attached a condition requiring approval of details and construction of dry and secure bicycle storage facilities to ensure alternative transport provision to motorised vehicles for occupiers. To ensure that occupiers have adequate access to refuse and recycling facilities I have attached a condition requiring approval of details and construction of suitable facilities prior to their occupation.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Proposed OS-Location Plans, 609 P001, 609 P002, 609 P003 and 609 P004
- 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those in the existing building.
- 3) Details of secure and dry cycle facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and maintained thereafter.
- 4) Details of refuse storage and recycling facilities including landscaping showing step free access shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and maintained thereafter.

End of Schedule