



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: 12 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/24/3336696

14 Conduit Road, Plumstead, Greenwich SE18 7AJ

- 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 A Teasdale against the decision of The Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/3386/F.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a mansard roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr A Teasdale against The Royal Borough of Greenwich Council and this is the subject of a separate Decision.

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 that of the local area, with reference to street scene .

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling is a two storey mid-terrace house located in a terrace of similar properties with butterfly roof forms that are set down behind a continuous front parapet. The appeal dwelling is a small HMO in C4 use for five persons with 5 bedrooms. One of these is in an existing rear first floor extension to the rear outrigger. Whilst the Council has indicated that the planning status of this existing extension is not confirmed, this is not a matter for me to consider as part of this appeal.
5. The proposal is for a mansard roof extension that would replace the existing butterfly roof form and would be set back from the existing parapet. This would provide an additional 6th bedroom.
6. Although the houses in the terrace exhibit significantly different windows, doors and finishes to their front elevations, the houses in the terrace have undergone extension only to their rear, retaining their original butterfly roof form and continuous parapet. This results in a coherence to the appearance of the terrace as a whole, which makes a significant contribution to the character of the street scene.

7. Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (the Framework) sets out that planning policies and decisions should allow mansard roof extensions on suitable properties. This paragraph further sets out that this is where their external appearance harmonises with the original building, including extensions to terraces where one or more of the terraced houses already has a mansard.
8. The terrace of which the appeal dwelling forms part is devoid of mansard extensions, and much of the quality of its character and appearance is defined by the retention of original butterfly roof forms and continuous parapet line. The proposal would, therefore, result in the loss of the original butterfly roof form of the appeal dwelling, which would be evident in rear views of the appeal dwelling as there is no rear parapet to houses in the terrace. This apparent loss would detract from the contribution that the existing original roofscape makes to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the local area.
9. Although the proposed mansard would be set back from the front parapet, it would be visible in street views of the appeal dwelling, both head on and in more tangential street views from the street as well as from the gardens and properties to the rear. In these views the proposed mansard would appear as a single stand-alone addition that would be discordant with the appeal dwelling and the existing terrace's roofscape. This would result in the proposal appearing as an uncharacteristic and incongruous addition to the appeal dwelling and the terrace of which it forms part. As such, the proposal would further detract from the character and appearance of the local area.
10. The appellant has drawn my attention to allowed appeals for mansard extensions in the council area¹. It is evident from the Inspectors' decisions that these appeals relate to properties that are in terraces where there are existing mansard extensions or with original 3 storey properties and relate to properties in terraces that differ considerably from that of the terrace of which the appeal dwelling forms part. As such I do not find that these provide convincing exemplars for the appeal proposal. These appeals would have been considered on their own merits, and that I have likewise considered the appeal proposal on its own merits, which is a main tenet of the planning system. I have, therefore, only afforded these other appeal decisions limited weight in my considerations.

Other Matters

11. The Council has expressed a concern that the proposed additional bedroom would be large enough for 2 persons, thereby creating a larger HMO for 7 persons in Sui Generis use. Planning permission is required for a change of use from a small HMO in C4 use to a larger HMO in Sui Generis use. However, the planning application to which this appeal relates does not seek such a change of use and the Council's decision notice does give this as a reason for refusal .
12. Whilst it is apparent that the proposed additional bedroom could possibly accommodate 2 persons, I do not find that there is any requirement for single occupancy bedrooms to be small, but rather that better quality accommodation in HMO's is facilitated by having good sized private as well as shared spaces. The council has not raised concerns with regard to the standard of

¹ Appeal refs: APP/E5330/D/20/3258956 and APP/E5330/D/21/3280720 (amongst others without appeal references)

accommodation for a 6 person HMO in C4 use and I see no reason to demur from this conclusion. On this basis I have considered the appeal proposal as constituting an extension to an existing smaller HMO in C4 use that would accommodate 6 persons. The proposed extension would, therefore, constitute a very modest increase in HMO accommodation in the Council area. However, such modest increases do collectively add up.

13. For the reasons given above, the proposal would result in substantial harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the terrace of which it forms part and that of the local area. This does not accord with the design guidance given in the Royal Borough of Greenwich Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2023), Policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014), Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023). Collectively these seek development, including extensions, that is of high design quality, responds to site context and integrates with the local area.
14. Whilst a single bedroom to the existing HMO would contribute to the provision of such accommodation in the Council area, the benefits would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR