



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 May 2025

by H Whitfield BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/24/3356247

89 Griffin Road, Plumstead, Greenwich SE18 7QE

- 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 Griffin Corp Ltd against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 24/2933/F.
 - The development proposed is described as “Construction of rear dormer roof extensions to the main rear roof slope and rear outrigger and insertion of 3 rooflights into the front roof slope (as per approved Certificate of Lawful Planning App. Ref. No. 23/3190/CP), conversion of property into 3 self-contained flats, bin and cycle storage, rear raised terrace, and all associated works.”
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of rear dormer roof extensions to the main rear roof slope and rear outrigger and insertion of 3 rooflights into the front roof slope, conversion of property into 3 self-contained flats, bin and cycle storage, rear raised terrace, and all associated works at 89 Griffin Road, Plumstead, Greenwich SE18 7QE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/2933/F, and subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of the proposal from the application form in my formal decision above, removing words that do not relate to an act of development.
3. The appellant has submitted revised plans with the appeal which show an amended internal layout for Flat 2 and an additional glazed privacy screen to the southern side of the rear terrace serving this flat. Due to the nature and positioning of the proposed privacy screen, I consider that accepting these plans would result in a fundamental change to the application and cause procedural unfairness to interested parties. If I were to accept these plans at this stage it would deprive those entitled to be consulted on an application the opportunity to make a representation. For these reasons, I have based my decision on the original plans that were before the Council when the application was determined.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area;
 - whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants with regard to the provision of internal space and privacy; and

- the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupants of 87 and 91 Griffin Road, with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property is a two storey mid-terraced dwelling in a predominately residential area containing properties of a similar style and appearance. The area is characterised by long terraces of dwellings with modest rear gardens. The gardens on Griffin Road back onto Ancona Road and properties on both roads tend to have two-storey outriggers and single-storey rear extensions which vary in form, design and material palette. I also observed that some properties have carried out roof alterations and constructed dormer windows to the rear. Consequently, whilst there is general uniformity from the front of the property, from the rear the area has a more varied character and appearance.
6. The appeal dwelling contains a basement level and so from the rear it appears to be 3 storeys in height. The rear elevation has a two-storey outrigger which adjoins the same projection on the adjoining property and a single-storey flat roof extension.
7. The scheme proposes the construction of a flat roof dormer window on the main rear roof slope of the dwelling and on the two-storey rear outrigger in addition to the insertion of 3 rooflights into the front roof slope. The Council confirms that a Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Development has been granted¹ for these external alterations, which they consider represents a legitimate fall-back position, and has therefore raised no concerns in relation to these elements of the development. Nor have concerns been raised in relation to the creation of the bin and cycle stores in relation to their effect on the character and appearance of the area. I see no reason to take a different view on these matters.
8. The proposal also includes the construction of a roof terrace/balcony on top of the existing single-storey flat roof range to the rear, which would serve as the external amenity space for Flat 2. The roof terrace would extend to approximately half of the depth of the existing flat roof, consist of decking and would be enclosed by an approximately 1.1m metal railing balustrade on two sides with a 1.7m obscure glass privacy screen on the northern side. Bespoke fibreglass planters are also proposed across the front of the flat roof.
9. Due to its elevated nature and proximity to surrounding properties, the roof terrace would be visible from surrounding residences. However, the roof terrace would be relatively modest and enclosed by a light-weight balustrade. Privacy glazing is proposed on one side but, this also would be light weight, and it would not project for a significant depth. Consequently, it would not add any significant bulk to the property. The addition of the planter to the front of the terrace would also provide some visual screening.
10. Rear roof terraces do not appear to be a feature of surrounding properties. Even so, there are local other examples of larger flat roof dormers and extensions with lantern lights that all contribute to the varied character and appearance of the rear elevations of the terraced rows. The scale of the raised terrace would be well proportioned with the single storey range below and the design of the balustrades would not be

¹ LPA Ref. 23/3190/CP

incongruous or visually intrusive. Therefore, the development would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the host property or surrounding area.

11. Paragraph i.94 of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2022) (the UDG), states that generally the Council does not support new roof terraces or balconies above flat roof extensions. However, this is design guidance, and it does not seek to resist such development exclusively. In this instance, due to the proposed scale and design, the location of the appeal site, the character of the surrounding area and the existence of other rear additions to surrounding dwellings, the development would not be contrary to the overall aim of the UDG to deliver high quality development that responds appropriately to its context.
12. For the above reasons, I conclude the proposed raised roof terrace and the proposed development as a whole would not harm the character and appearance of the host building or surrounding area. As such, it would comply with Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) (the LP) and policies DH1 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014) (the RGLP Core Strategy). Amongst other things, these seek high quality developments that respond appropriately to the sites context and character and improves the built environment.

Living conditions of future occupants

13. The floor plans show that Flat 2 would comprise an open plan kitchen, living and bedroom area and a separate bathroom. According to the submitted plans, the flat would be approximately 39sqm and is proposed as a 1-bedroom 1-person studio.
14. The Council contends that as the kitchen is separate from the bedroom area and the bedroom/living area is large, it should be considered as a 1-bed, 2-person unit. Consequently, it is contended Flat 2 would fall short of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) for this unit type. Compliance with these standards is required under Policies H5 and DH1 of the RGLP Core Strategy through reference to The Mayor of London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (2016) (the Housing SPG).
15. However, the plans before me indicate the main room of Flat 2 would only be able to accommodate a single bed along with all necessary living room furniture and appropriate kitchen fixtures and fittings. Therefore, I tend to favour the appellant's contention that Flat 2 would only be suitable for single person occupancy rather than for a couple. With this in mind, it is appropriate to adopt the NDSS minimum floor area standard of 39sqm for a 1-bedroom 1-person dwelling in assessing the adequacy of the amount of internal space for Flat 2. The plans indicate the flat would meet this requirement.
16. The Council also considers the raised terrace proposed to serve Flat 2 would result in unacceptable overlooking impacts into the garden for Flat 1, compromising the privacy of these future occupiers. The terrace area would be relatively modest and only likely able to accommodate a small table and chairs. The roof terrace would not extend the full depth of the flat roof range on the dwelling and therefore views of the space directly outside the rear ground floor windows would be limited. Nevertheless, direct views into the remainder of Flat 1's garden area would be achievable from the raised terrace. However, garden areas in the vicinity are already overlooked by neighbouring and opposing development. Within this context, overlooking from the proposed roof terrace onto the garden for Flat 1 would not be unacceptably intrusive.

17. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude the development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants with regard to the provision of internal space and privacy. Therefore, it complies with Policy D6 of the LP and policies H5 and DH1 of the RGLP Core Strategy. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development provides adequate living conditions for future occupants and is consistent with the Housing SPG.
18. The decision notice refers to Policy H(c) of the RGLP Core Strategy in respect of this main issue. However, this policy is not determinative in my assessment of this appeal given it relates specifically to back land and infill development rather than the conversion of existing properties.

Living conditions of existing occupants of 87 and 91 Griffin Road

19. 87 Griffin Road (No 87) lies to the north of the appeal site. The adjoining dwelling has a two-storey outrigger that adjoins and mirrors the same range on the appeal dwelling, as well as a smaller mono-pitched single storey range. 91 Griffin Road (No 91) lies to the south of the appeal site and this adjoining dwelling has the same two-storey outrigger which is detached and pitches away from the appeal site in addition to a slightly longer single storey flat roof extension which is set away from the common boundary by a narrow alleyway.
20. At present, there are views from the upper floor rear windows of the appeal property into adjoining gardens. However, such views do not allow sight into No 87's and No 81's rear windows.
21. The proposed roof terrace would have a privacy screen along the northern side that would prevent direct downward overlooking into the amenity space directly to the rear of No 87 or into its rear windows. The terrace would allow views into the rear part of No 87's garden away from the house, but in these regards, it would be similar to views from existing first and second-floor windows in the appeal property. I am also satisfied that there would be no additional perception of overlooking compared to the existing situation.
22. Direct downward views from the terrace towards No 91 would tend to be of the alleyway to the side of the property's extension, rather than over the amenity space directly to the rear of the property. The only windows in the single storey side elevation of No 91 are positioned close to the main body of the dwelling and set back from the proposed terrace and so, there would be very limited opportunities for overlooking into the property itself. There would be views from the terrace of No 91's garden. However, these would be restricted due to the limited size of the terrace and the screening effect of No 91's own single storey extension. Views of the remainder of the garden or a perception of overlooking from this terrace would not be dissimilar to other views achievable from surrounding properties or existing windows in the appeal dwelling.
23. For the above reasons, I conclude the development would not harm the living conditions of the existing occupants of Nos 87 and 91, with particular regard to privacy. Therefore, it would accord with Policy D3 of the LP and Policy DH(b) of the RGLP Core Strategy which amongst other things, require developments to protect the amenity of adjacent occupiers.
24. In the Council's reason for refusal, reference is made to the UDG. However, I have not been directed to a particular extract of the UDG to which the Council alleges

conflict. Nevertheless, considering my findings on this main issue, the development does not conflict with the overall aim of the UDG which seeks to secure high quality development that responds appropriately to its site context.

Conditions

25. The Council has suggested several conditions which I have considered in light of the advice in the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Where appropriate, I have adjusted the wording of the conditions in the interests of precision and enforceability.
26. In addition to the standard three-year time limit condition for implementation, it is necessary to specify the approved plans in the interests of certainty. However, I have amended the suggested condition to refer to the original plans submitted with the planning application.
27. A condition has also been imposed to require compliance with the submitted materials details to ensure that the development has an appropriate visual appearance. I have amended the Council's wording to include compliance with the details on the approved plans where the materials are not proposed to match the existing building. Conditions are also imposed to secure the provision of refuse bins and secure cycle storage in the interests of character and appearance, providing adequate householder waste disposal and promoting sustainable travel.
28. I have also attached a condition relating to the amendment of the Traffic Order to prevent future occupiers from obtaining an on-street residents parking permit, in order to promote sustainable transport by reducing the need for car travel. However, I have amended the suggested wording in the interests of precision and enforceability.
29. The Council has suggested a condition requiring drawings to be submitted to demonstrate that the development complies with the optional building regulations requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. I have imposed this condition given it is reasonable and necessary to comply with Policy D7 of the LP. However, I have adjusted the timescale for submission to pre-occupation so as not to unnecessarily restrict development from commencing.
30. A condition is also imposed to secure the installation of the privacy screen shown on the approved plans prior to first occupation in order to preserve the living conditions of No 87.

Conclusion

31. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan, when read as a whole. Material considerations do not indicate a decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude the appeal should be allowed.

H Whitfield

INSPECTOR

Schedule of 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 drawing nos:
 - 4D-424E E 00 'Block and Location Plans'
 - 4D-424E P 01 'Proposed Drawings Floor Plan'
 - 4D-424E P 02 'Proposed Drawings Floor Plan'
 - 4D-424E P 03 'Proposed Drawings Elevations'
 - 4D-424E P 04 'Proposed Drawings Elevations'
 - 4D-424E P 05 'Proposed Drawings Elevations'
 - 4D-424E P 06 'Proposed Drawings Sections'
- 3) The external materials of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building unless otherwise stated on the approved plans.
- 4) Prior to the first occupation of the development drawings illustrating that the proposed development hereby permitted, complies with Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings', shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out and retained for the lifetime of the development in accordance the approved details.
- 5) Prior to the first occupation of the development, five 240L waste bins (2 for general waste, 2 for recyclable waste and 1 for food waste) shall be made available for use on site and thereafter maintained for the lifetime of the development thereafter.
- 6) Prior to the first occupation of the development, full details of two separate secure and dry cycle parking spaces for four bicycles shall be provided to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle storage units shall thereafter be made available for use by the prospective occupants prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and shall be maintained for the lifetime of the development thereafter.
- 7) Prior to the first occupation of the flats hereby approved the local planning authority shall be informed in writing of the properties' full postal addresses and the dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the Traffic Regulation Order has been amended by removing the dwellings from the list of dwellings for which Residents Parking Permits can be issued.
- 8) Prior to the first occupation of the flats hereby approved the 1.7m obscure glass panel balustrade as shown on the approved plan no. 4D-424E P 03 'Proposed Drawings Elevations' shall be installed and retained for the lifetime of the development thereafter.

**** End of Schedule ****