



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 June 2025

by **Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U5360/D/25/3365557

4 Statham Grove, Hackney, London N16 9DP

- 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 Miss Sarah Wolf against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hackney.
 - The application reference is 2024/2801.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a rear single storey extension, full width dormer to main roof and dormer to rear outrigger, new windows to front elevation on first and second floors and a VELUX roof light to the front roof pitch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. The proposal is to enlarge and alter the appeal property, which is 3-storey (above ground) dwelling of traditional style that forms part of a residential terrace on Statham Grove. A notable feature of properties within this terrace is the consistency in the general appearance of their detailed period frontages, which gives a pleasing unity to this part of the local townscape. In particular, the pattern of forward projecting 3-storey bays, gables and ornate windows, which repeats along the front elevation of the entire terrace creates a strong rhythm to the existing built form, which is locally distinctive.
4. The site does not fall within a conservation area nor is No 4 a listed building. Nevertheless, for the reasons given, the appeal dwelling and the terrace to which it belongs positively contribute to the character and appearance of the local area.
5. New windows are proposed in the front wall above the main entrance of No 4 that would broadly line up with each other and their existing counterparts at the first and second floor levels. Longer distance views of these new additions from the road would be largely obstructed by the existing front bays on either side. However, the proposed windows would be readily evident from a short section of Statham Grove just in front of the site. From this public vantage point, the new windows would be prominent features of the host building given their elevated position.

6. In these views, the proposal would draw the eye because the new windows would visually compete with and so detract from those within the front bay, which is a distinctive feature of the original building. The additional windows would also disrupt the pattern of fenestration across the wider terrace. By introducing a discordant element to an otherwise harmonious built frontage, the proposal would be obtrusive in the street scene and an unwelcome addition to the local area.
7. At the rear, a full width dormer extension would be placed onto the main roof slope. At a lower level, a secondary dormer would also be placed on the top of the existing 3-storey rear projection with the rear wall altered to form a slope. Although these elements of the appeal scheme would not exceed the main ridge of the host building, and be set up from the eaves, they would still be sizeable additions. This arrangement would add disproportionate scale and bulk of the upper part of the building. It would set the finished dwelling clearly apart from the rest of the terrace, which appears to be largely free of roof level extensions.
8. The ground floor extension would wrap around side and rear of the 3-storey rear projection. With its part almost flat roof and lower position relative to the host building due to the difference in ground levels, the new addition would have a low profile at the rear of the property. Its modest scale and bulk would also be secondary to the more substantial host building. Nevertheless, the proposal would extend across almost the full width of the plot and infill the space around the side and back of the existing building. This arrangement would alter the traditional 'L' shape of the existing dwelling and partly mask a ground floor rear window, which appears to be original feature of the host building. When seen together, the rear extensions proposed at ground and roof level, would unduly interrupt the rhythm to the rear terrace created by the paired 3-storey rear projections, the regular gaps left between them and the consistent pattern of windows. In doing so, the character of the appeal property would be spoilt and its contribution to the local area diminished.
9. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Extensions and Alterations* (SPD) states that any residential extension or alteration should respect the architectural character of the original building. It also advises that rear dormers should be set in from the edges of the host roof and be no more than half the height of the main roof. Even allowing some flexibility to the application of the guidelines in the SPD to reflect local circumstances, the proposal would be at odds with this document.
10. In reaching these conclusions, I note that the external materials to be used would match those of the existing dwelling. I have also had regard to the examples of roof level extensions or proposals to which the appellant has referred.
11. Specifically, summary details have been provided of the Council's recent decision to issue a certificate of lawful use or development for a rear dormer at 18 Statham Grove. In reaching a decision to issue this certificate, the Council would have only considered whether the proposal complied with relevant limitations and conditions of the General Permitted Development Order as it stood at that time. As that assessment differs to a planning application, which is assessed on its planning merits, this case is not directly comparable with the appeal scheme.
12. Reference is also made to roof level extensions on properties along Stoke Newington Church Street, with an aerial photograph provided. These cases do not form part of the same terrace as No 4 and so their context differs to that of the proposal that in any event has been assessed on its own merits. As such, I am

unable to attach more than limited weight to these existing extensions in support of the appeal.

13. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policy D3 of The London Plan, Policy LP1 of the Hackney Local Plan 2033 and the guidance in the Council's SPD. Together, these policies and guidance aim to ensure that development responds to local character and is compatible with the existing townscape. It also conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.

Other matters

14. Reference is made to the options available to enlarge the existing dwelling through the exercise of permitted development (PD) rights that would not require planning permission. Few details of this alternative approach have been provided and so I am unable to gauge whether any of these options would be directly comparable with the various elements of the appeal scheme.
15. The proposal makes efficient use of the space available at the rear of the site. Once complete, the additional living space would improve the living conditions of future occupiers. However, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
16. Interested parties raise several additional objections including the effect of the proposal on the rear garden of No 4, and on light, outlook and privacy. These are important matters, and I have taken into account all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings in relation to the main issue, these considerations have not been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

17. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan. There are no material considerations, including those of the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.
18. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR