



Studio
Charrette

Proposed single storey extension.

5A Westmoreland Road, London SE17 2AX

Heritage Statement/ Assessment.

Application Site

The application site is part of a terrace of shops that front onto Westmoreland Road, Walworth, London SE17 2AX with a service yard to the rear which in turn gains access to Arnside Street.

The property is not listed but is sited within the Walworth Road Conservation Area.

A previous application was submitted and refused and also dismissed at Planning Appeal to retain an existing single storey extension at the rear.

The application site is located near to, but not within the Major Town Centre of Elephant and Castle and the protected shopping frontage.

It is noted that the application site is located in the Walworth Road Conservation Area, Aylesbury Area Plan, Air Quality Management Area, and Environment Agency Flood Zone 3.

The building is fronted by a large pavement and cycle parking. The existing property is a three storey building which fronts onto Westmoreland Road with a service yard to the rear.



The Walworth Road Conservation Area is located south of Elephant and Castle town centre, within the commercial core of Walworth and principally centres on the Walworth Road and the northern end of Camberwell Road. The conservation area is mainly defined by one principle arterial road linear in character, which exhibits roadside buildings (housing, retail and civic) from all stages of its historical development from the later 18th century through to mid-20th century. In contrast, the character of the streets off the Walworth Road and the northern section of the Camberwell Road are defined by 19th and early 20th century housing. The railway line, constructed in the mid 19th century, runs parallel with the Walworth Road has defined the western side of the conservation area. Open land and former gardens were filled in with predominantly industrial and manufacturing uses, in a small number of locations this character has been retained.

The Proposal:

The proposal is for a single storey flat roof rear extension and the removal of the existing unauthorised rear extension. The extension would have a flat roof and would now be constructed of matching brickwork and materials.

Assessment

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the Act') establishes the legislative framework for consideration of this application. Section 70(2) of the Act requires the decision-maker in determining planning applications/appeals to have regard to the Development Plan, insofar as it is material to the application/appeal, and to any other material consideration. Where the Development Plan is material to the development proposal it must therefore be taken into account. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application/appeal to be determined in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The key legal provisions relating to the consideration of heritage assets in the planning system are s72 (1) and s66 (1) of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 which state that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area" and "have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

The following policy and guidance documents are recognised as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance
National Planning Practice Guidance (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)

Local Planning Policy:

The London Plan 2021:

On 2 March 2021, the Mayor of London published the London Plan 2021. The spatial development strategy sets a strategic framework for planning in Greater London and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Greater London. The relevant policies are:

- Policy SD6 Town centres and high streets
- Policy D4 Delivering good design
- Policy D12 Fire safety
- Policy D14 Noise
- Policy E9 Retail, markets and hot food takeaways
- Policy SI 7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
- Policy SI 12 Flood risk management
- Policy T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
- Policy T5 Cycling
- Policy T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

Southwark Plan 2022:

The Southwark Plan 2022 was adopted on 23 February 2022. The plan provides strategic policies, development management policies, area visions and site allocations which set out the strategy for managing growth and development across the borough from 2019 to 2036.

The relevant policies are:

- P13 Design of places
- P14 Design quality
- P20 Conservation areas
- P21 Conservation of the historic environment and natural heritage
- P23 Archaeology
- P35 Town and local centres
- P37 Protected shopping frontages
- P48 Hot food takeaways
- P49 Public transport
- P50 Highways impacts
- P51 Walking
- P53 Cycling
- P56 Protection of amenity
- P69 Sustainability standards
- P70 Energy

Area based AAP's or SPD's Of relevance in the consideration of this application are:

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2008)

Heritage SPD (2021)

Walworth Road Conservation Area Appraisal

Main relevant Planning Constraints:

- Conservation Area

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The application site is one of a group of three storey properties of similar design and materials, fronting Westmoreland Road and forming part of the CA. The Walworth Road Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) identifies these buildings as being of post-World War II construction, with such properties comprising stock or fletton brick.

Whilst the CAA does not identify these buildings as being of merit, neither are they identified as detracting from the character and appearance of the CA. The rear of these properties forms part of a yard with their rear ground floor elevations sharing a similar building line and being of a brick construction, reflective of other buildings comprising this part of the CA. There are painted timber structures adjoining the rear of properties comprising the wider yard, however, the timber building is viewed within the immediate context of those properties fronting Westmoreland Road and not those of the wider yard.

The design of the proposal is considered to be acceptable as the proposal will leave the principal elevation facing onto Westmoreland Road unchanged and the proposed staff room will be completely hidden from the road frontage. The proposed staff room will not be visible from Horsley Street or Arnside Street at the rear.

The extent of the fabric that contributes to its heritage significance is essentially retained as part of this proposal and the materials have now been amended to ensure the extension is viewed in the context of the other buildings along this terrace. The historic environment considerations are the character of the Conservation Area. Special regard has to be had to preserving the building or its setting in the determination of the application in accordance with sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF discusses the requirements to maintain heritage assets, and that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Local Policy mirrors the NPPF, in that it states that heritage assets should be protected, conserved and where possible enhanced, emphasising the original form and function where possible. Development proposals should seek the retention and repair of heritage assets.

Whilst the proposal is for new development, the approach proposed is sensitive to the area and the setting of the building.

The proposed alterations would not involve any changes that would be highly visible from within the street scene, nor the surrounding conservation area.

The changes proposed are all to be made to an existing building, are minor and seek to improve the use of the building without harming its setting within the Conservation Area.

The proposed design and layout seeks to minimise the harm to the building. It is our view that the proposed alterations are minimal and as a result there will be no material impact on the special interest of the building or area.

The planning policies also require proposals to respect and contribute to distinctiveness of the area in which it is located and to have a complementary building design and materials. The proposal is primarily a minor ground floor extension to improve the use of the building as detailed above with the materials now proposed being sympathetic to the host building.

The proposal is minor in comparison with the extent of existing extensions and alterations which have occurred in the surrounding area.

Policies advise that there is a presumption in favour of development proposals which seek to protect, preserve, and where possible enhance, the cultural value, architectural character, visual appearance and setting of heritage assets. It is our view that the proposal would not have a material impact on the special interest of the building or Conservation Area. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with local planning policy or National Planning Policy.

In this case, as can be seen from the drawings submitted and the comments above, the site has the capacity to accommodate the proposed development in an acceptable manner which meets the needs of future occupants, including the provision of adequate access, parking and space, and what is proposed would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

Taking into consideration the mix of property sizes, changes to other properties including various extensions visible from the application site and existing boundary treatments, this proposal would not impact the massing of the building from the streetscene, nor result in any harm to the setting, character, historical integrity or appearance of the building.

Therefore, it meets the requirements of the above referenced planning policies in terms of scale and also ensuring the proposal does not have a negative impact on the existing streetscene.

There is less than substantial harm to the heritage asset and there is no harm to the setting or character of the existing buildings and wider area. It would result in the opportunity to improve the existing energy efficiency of the building and provide much needed suitable space in an improved more energy efficient restored building. It is considered that the harm is not only less than substantial but limited, and it meets all the necessary tests.

The proposal would respect the design, scale, materials, character, appearance and proportions of the existing building and would preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area and wider street scene. The proposal amounts to Sustainable Development which accords with the prevailing policies of the Development Plan and NPPF.

Conclusion:

Following a review of the proposals applicable policy and material considerations it is of our professional view that the development is in compliance with all applicable policies as previously illustrated.

The NPPF identifies a series of the components that are considered critical to achieving sustainable development. In my opinion, the above assessment of the application proposals demonstrates that the application responds to, and is in accordance with, the requirements of the adopted planning policy within the development plan and material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The street scene comprises of a varied assortment of 3 and 4 storey modern and traditional styled buildings. The closest listed building is "Harkers Studio" a grade II listed building at Farady, Southwark London SE17 with a source ID 1385807 and a English Heritage Legacy ID of 471219. The proposal is not visible from this building. As can be expected in this Area of Southwark, London there are numerous listed buildings and conservation listings such as railings and facades, located within a five mile radius. However, the small and unintrusive nature of the proposal does not impact upon any listed buildings or special features in the area.

We see no reason for the council to refuse our request for planning approval and kindly request for a timely decision to be made in line with applicable guidance of the NPPF.

Should any further information be requested to assist in the council's assessment of the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Thank you,

Kind regards,

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