

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2016

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 5th October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/16/3153474
79 Newquay Road, Catford, London SE6 2NW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Michael Senior against the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/15/095024, is dated 30 December 2015.
 - The development proposed is a single storey side and porch extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Culverley Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within the Culverley Green Conservation Area (the Conservation Area). The Conservation Area Character Appraisal (the CACA) describes the area as a mainly Edwardian residential suburb developed in a largely piecemeal fashion in the early part of the 20th century. It goes on to state that although there are no listed buildings within the Conservation Area, the area's special interest lies in the strong, cohesive identity of the first phases of the Edwardian development.
 4. The CACA recognises that later stages of the suburb, principally those streets towards the south such as Newquay Road and the parallel Arran Road, which were the last part of the suburb to be developed, have some similarities in form to those to the north. Although the CACA goes on to note that the architectural character of the houses here differs from that found in the earlier areas of the suburb, Newquay Road nonetheless demonstrates a broadly similar scale, character and form to that found elsewhere within the Conservation Area.
 5. The appeal property is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings which, in turn, form a row of four pairs (Nos 77 / 79 to 89 / 91) of broadly similar properties that lie towards the eastern end of Newquay Road. As a whole, properties along Newquay Road exhibit a broad range of extensions and
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- alterations, but the appeal site and its adjacent pairs of semi-detached properties represent something of a counterpoint to those around it.
6. There is a clear sense of rhythm along this part of Newquay Road, building on that created elsewhere along its length by the prevailing semi-detached nature and form of the other dwellings. What I found to be particularly characteristic of the appeal site and the adjoining pairs of semi-detached dwellings, however, was the rhythm and spacing created between the buildings.
 7. Between each pair of dwellings there are pairs of attached single garages, recessed behind the main face of each dwelling, with distinctive peaked gables with sloping parapet walls above. Although I observed there to be a very slight stagger in the building line of each pair of semi-detached dwellings, the garages provide a consistent and uniform link between the pairs which I found to be an effective and pleasing counterpoint to the bulk and massing of the extended dwellings opposite, with their substantial linking two storey side extensions.
 8. The proposal, whilst seeking to retain the sloping parapet wall at the front of the side extension, would in fact bring it forward of its current position and reinstate it level with the main face of No 79. As a consequence, the distinctive recess between the dwelling and the pair of linking single storey garages and No 81 would be lost. Moreover, the proposal would result in the front of the proposed extension projecting forward of the adjoining half of the existing structure at No 81. This would break up the consistent building line across the front elevation of this pair of garages, leaving an awkward flank elevation and a short return to the front face of the garage at No 81.
 9. Although the side extension would not project forward of the main face of the appeal property, the visual impact of this element of the proposal would nonetheless be jarring and incongruous. Furthermore, the proposed addition of a porch to the front elevation of the appeal property would add further conflicting lines to the front of the property. Whilst I note the Council's comments regarding other porches found along Newquay Road they appear, for the most part, to be relatively light-weight structures with predominantly glazed front and side elevations.
 10. The proposed porch, whilst of relatively modest dimensions, would be a less unobtrusive, and much heavier structure. The front door and adjacent glazed panel would be framed by masonry walls, whilst both side elevations would be solid masonry walls. The nature and solidity of the porch would therefore further disrupt the prevailing rhythm identified above, creating a jarring mix of building elements at the appeal property and further eroding the particular and distinctive rhythm and spacing evident in the block of properties between Nos 77 and 79 and Nos 89 and 91 Newquay Road.
 11. Thus, for the reasons set out, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and those adjoining it. The proposal would fail to provide an adequate response to local distinctiveness and to how it would relate to the scale and alignment of the existing street and its building frontages. Nor would it achieve a degree of architectural subordination to the original building. As a consequence, the proposal would be contrary to Policies DM30 and DM31 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan, which together seek to achieve high quality design that, amongst other

factors, respects and / or complements the form, characteristics and detailing of the original building, neighbouring buildings, and the area as a whole.

12. In finding harm to the character and appearance of the host property and those surrounding it, I also conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Culverley Green Conservation Area, to which I am statutorily required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of.
13. In the parlance of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I find this harm to be less than substantial, but I am nonetheless required to attach considerable importance and weight to that harm. As set out in the Framework, any harm should require clear and convincing justification and the harm should be weighed against public benefit. Whilst the proposal would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant, including an enlarged downstairs w.c, I have not, been provided with the clear and convincing justification required to outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Other Matters

14. The proposed side extension would be single storey in its entirety. The rear portion would be flat roofed, extending along the side boundary with No 81, to a point broadly level with the rear of the appeal property. At this extent, the Council estimate that it would project beyond the rear of No 81 by approximately 3 metres. From my observations of the appeal site and my views of the neighbouring property, I see no reason to disagree with that figure, or with the Council's conclusion that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact upon the living conditions of that property. Whilst the absence of harm in this respect weighs modestly in favour of the proposal, it does not outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR