

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 November 2016

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/16/3159275

33 Watlington Grove, Sydenham SE26 5RR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr James MacNaily against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/16/096222 was refused by notice dated 22 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as a 'roof extension for a loft conversion - plans showing details'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns an end of terrace two storey dwelling. The terrace has a particularly consistent appearance with an important aspect of this being the uniform height of the individual dwellings with a horizontal parapet at the front. There are also other similar terraces in the street.
 4. However, the proposed roof extension would increase the height of the host dwelling. The parapet at the front would, according to the Appellant, be raised in height by 0.9m. This would result in an abrupt contrast with the consistent roofline of the other properties in the terrace. In consequence, the scheme would unacceptably disrupt the highly unified appearance, with the extended dwelling being a visually intrusive and incongruous presence, negatively affecting the streetscene.
 5. The proposed development would involve a flat roof being constructed above the 'V' shaped butterfly roof. The development would therefore give rise to the loss of this attractive and distinctive part of the original dwelling. As a result, of these detrimental effects at the front and rear, the architectural quality of the host dwelling and the cohesion and integrity of the terrace would be unacceptably diminished.
 6. The Appellant has not identified any specific development in the locality in support of the appeal. I saw some roof extensions to dwellings in another
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street from the back garden of no. 33 at my site visit. However, these do not affect the integrity of the host dwelling and terrace, of which they do not form a part. In any event, they show the detrimental effect such unsympathetic development can have and, in my view, should not be used as a precedent for further disharmonious alterations.

7. As a result, it is concluded that the character and appearance of the locality would be harmed. The aims of Development Management Local Plan, DM Policy 30 include seeking a positive relationship with the townscape. DM Policy 31 intends that, among other things, proposals should complement the architectural characteristics of the original building. It also aims to prevent extensions adversely affecting the architectural integrity of a group of buildings. DM Policies 30 and 31, as well as Core Strategy Policy 15 and London Plan Policy 7.4 intend that development should be of a high standard of design. London Plan Policy 7.6 seeks a positive contribution to the streetscape. Because of the adverse effects I have identified there would be conflict with these policies.
8. The Appellant indicates that the butterfly roof often leaks because the valley gutter fills up with waste and leaves. However, there is no technical evidence to show that such a problem should be addressed by the construction of the proposed extension, rather than simply by routine maintenance.
9. The Appellant suggests that an extension could be built using permitted development rights. However, despite the indication that a Certificate of Lawfulness will be sought there is nothing to show that one has been obtained and I have not been provided with any drawings to enable a clear comparison with the current proposal. I am not therefore persuaded that this matter should be afforded any significant weight in favour of the appeal.
10. The Appellant indicates that the proposal would contribute towards meeting housing need. However, the additional accommodation would be achieved at the undue expense of the quality of the built environment. As a result and taking account of all other matters raised, it is determined that the appeal fails.

M Evans

INSPECTOR