

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons), MCD, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 6 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/16/3158282

108 New Park Road, London, SW2 4LW

- 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 Virgil Hoxha against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/02586/FUL dated 27 April 2016 was refused by notice dated 22 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey ground floor rear extension and a two storey side extension. Erection of a rear dormer window and alterations to existing roof shape.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located on the north-western side of New Park Road. The properties on this side of the road in the vicinity of the site consist mainly of semi-detached dwellings, interspersed in places with detached dwellings. The buildings exhibit a mix of styles with differing building materials and some containing features such as bay windows. Many of the properties have been subject to alterations, although the consistent building lines, the set back of the properties behind front garden areas and the degree of symmetry which exists between some pairs of semi-detached houses, contribute to a pleasant residential character.
 4. The appeal proposal includes a two storey side extension and alterations to the roof form, including a rear dormer which would utilise matching materials to the existing property. The appeal scheme has been amended from a previous application and includes a hipped roof design. However, it would also involve raising part of the roof, which would significantly alter the appearance of the host property and also harm the symmetrical appearance it currently enjoys with the adjoining semi. Whilst the site is not located within a Conservation Area or in an area with any defined special character or nearby listed buildings,
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the proposal would nevertheless harm the character and appearance of the area.

5. I accept that there are numerous examples of roof extensions and alterations in the surrounding area and that some of these have resulted in an unbalancing effect between pairs of properties with a consequential effect on the area. However, the unsympathetic additions that I saw when I visited the site and surrounding area, only serve to illustrate how roof alterations can have a serious adverse impact on the host property and the character of an area. I do not agree with the appellant that the roof alterations proposed here would appear less conspicuous in the street scene, despite the presence of other semi-detached pairs that have been subject to alterations. The appeal property and the adjoining semi-detached property still retain a strong degree of symmetry, including their roof form and the proposal would not constitute an example of a sympathetic development. Moreover, although some details of other referenced extensions have been presented, I am not aware of the full circumstances of these cases and each application and appeal should be considered on its individual merits.
6. The raising of the roof is also proposed to facilitate a rear dormer, which would have a box like form. Notwithstanding my findings on the effect of raising the roof, I do not consider that in itself, the dormer would have an unduly bulky design and given its position to the rear of the property, it would not have an unduly adverse effect on the character of the area.
7. I therefore conclude the development would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance on the host property and the area and it would be contrary to Policies Q5, Q7, Q8 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan and the Building Alterations & Extensions Supplementary Planning Document which require, amongst other matters, developments to adequately preserve or enhance the prevailing local character and positively respond to the original roof form. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), which states that permission should be refused for development of a poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. It is also therefore not the form of sustainable development which the Framework intends there to be a presumption in favour of.

Other Matters

8. I also acknowledge that there would be no harm to neighbours' living conditions and that other aspects of the scheme, such as the rooflights and the single storey extension are deemed to be acceptable by the Council. These are however neutral considerations and not benefits of the proposal.
9. I note the proposal seeks to provide additional living accommodation and to make more efficient use of the site. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified in respect of the main issue.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

F Rafiq INSPECTOR