

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2017

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3167262

3 Elfrida Crescent, London, SE6 3EP

- 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 Yaser Alkarim against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/16/098694, dated 15 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of dormer extensions in the side and rear roof slopes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed dormer extensions on the character and appearance of the area around Elfrida Crescent.

Reasons

3. No 3 Elfrida Crescent is a two-storey, end-terraced house situated on the western side of the road, close to its junction with Southend Lane. In common with No 9, which is at the opposite end of the terrace, it has a gambrel-style hipped roof with a front gable element.
 4. The proposed development would include the construction of two dormer extensions, one in the rear roof slope and one on the side roof slope above the steeper lower element. These extensions would allow for conversion of the loft into living space. The rear dormer would be some 2 metres wide and a little under 2 metres high. The side dormer would be 2.4 metres wide and a little under 2 metres high.
 5. The houses on Elfrida Crescent largely comprise short terraces of 4 dwellings, with a small number of semi-detached houses. All have hipped roofs, though some of the terraced houses have end houses with gable fronts. These include Nos 3-9, Nos 19-25 and Nos 16-22. There is a general uniformity of design and a distinctive symmetry across all of the terraces on Elfrida Crescent, as there is generally in the wider area, where some longer terraces are also found. No 3 is the southernmost house in its terrace, and it is prominent when viewed from around the junction with Southend Lane.
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6. DM Policy 31 of the Council's Development Management Local Plan (LP) indicates that extensions will not be permitted where they would adversely affect the architectural integrity of a group of buildings as a whole, or cause an incongruous element in terms of the important features of a character area. In this case, I find that the proposed side dormer would be a prominent and discordant feature in the context of the host property, the terrace of which it is a part, and the wider area along Elfrida Crescent and nearby roads. It would add a significant asymmetric feature, detrimental to the architectural integrity of the terrace, and it would be prominent in the street scene due to its size and position close to the junction with Southend Lane.
7. The Council appears to have no significant objections to the rear dormer and, in view of its limited visibility, I concur with that view. However, this lack of harm at the rear of the property does not compensate for the harm to the roofscape and design uniformity of the street scene that would be caused by the side extension.
8. The appellant contends that the additional living space that would be created by the proposal would be beneficial both to the housing stock and to the family. This may be so, but any benefit to the housing stock is extremely limited and, from the evidence before me, I am not convinced that the proposal as submitted is the only way that additional living accommodation could be created at the property.
9. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would be detrimental to the largely uniform and symmetrical features in the design of the houses in the area, and that it would consequently be harmful to the character and appearance of the area around Elfrida Crescent. It would, on this basis, conflict with Policies DM30 and DM31 of the LP which require the design of developments to achieve the creation of a positive relationship to the existing townscape, and to respect and/or complement the form, architectural characteristics, and detailing of original buildings.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR