
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by Oliver Blower MA (T&CP)

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3175836

18 Cooper's Lane, Grove Park, London SE12 0QA

- 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 Daniel Dirrane against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/16/099340, dated 01/12/2016, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as "construction of two storey extensions to side & rear of 18 Coopers Lane".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on 1) the character and appearance of the host building and area and, 2) the living conditions of the occupiers of No 12 Pagnell Road, with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is one of a pair of two-storey semi-detached houses located on a prominent corner plot at the junction of Pragnell Road and Cooper's Lane. The appeal building has an architecturally distinctive cat-slide roof, which is a typical feature of the immediate area. The semi-detached pair is broadly symmetrical, although this has been diminished by a later side dormer extension to No 18. Nonetheless, the remaining symmetry of these houses reflects that of the semi-detached houses on the opposite side of the junction, and together they create an attractive entrance to Pragnell Road and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.
 4. The proposal seeks, in part, the erection of a first-floor rear extension that would connect to the existing side dormer, with a hipped roof that would extend the entire width of the dormer and first-floor addition.
 5. The increase to the height of the dormer, coupled with the depth of the first floor extension, would lead to an excessively bulky addition which would subsume a large part of the distinctive cat-slide roof, appear excessively large
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in relation to the modest scale of the house, and further unbalance the symmetry of the semi-detached pair and their counterparts on the opposite side of the junction when viewed from Cooper's Lane and Pragnell Road.

6. I note that the first-floor rear extension is set down from the ridge and set in from the flank wall of the original house, in accordance with part of policy 31 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan 2014 (DM). Nonetheless, due to the angle of the cat-slide roof, the bulk of the first-floor would project significantly beyond the side roof slope. This, in conjunction with the introduction of other varied roof forms - particularly where the new hipped-roof joins the original roof - would give the proposed first-floor a contrived appearance which would significantly detract from the sweeping fall of the catslide-roof and simple proportions of the original building.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and immediate area. It is therefore contrary to policy 15 of the Lewisham Core Strategy 2011(CS) and policies 30 and 31 of the DM. These policies seek to ensure, amongst other things, high quality design which is sensitive to the local context and responds to local character; a design response that relates to the scale and alignment of the existing street including its building frontages; and development which respects or complements the form, setting, period, architectural characteristics, and detailing of the original building. It is also contrary the Lewisham Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document (updated 2012) (SPD), which advises that development should respect the general character of the area.
8. I acknowledge that the proposed materials would broadly match those of the existing dwelling. However, this factor is not sufficient reason to permit an otherwise unsatisfactory form of development.
9. I have had regard to similar extensions at 13 Pragnell Road, 276 Burnt Ash Hill, 3 Exford Road and 20 Coopers Lane. However, I have not been provided with their full planning history and, in any event, these houses are not located on prominent corner plots and so are not directly comparable to the appeal site.
10. Reference has also been made to two appeals in Bromley and Southend-on - Sea, however these developments were assessed against different development plans, and it is not clear from the evidence whether the proposals are directly comparable in terms of siting or design.

Living Conditions

11. The proposal seeks, in part, the erection of a single-storey rear extension approximately 4.8m in depth, close to the boundary with No 12, with a pitched roof that would rise to broadly the height of the first-floor windowsill.
12. The north-west facing rear glazed door of No 12 currently looks out between the flank wall of its own single-storey projection and the lower garden fence between it and No 18, offering an open outlook.
13. The excessive depth and height of the proposed flank wall, in combination with the existing single-storey projection at No 12, would result in a severe sense of enclosure when viewed from the rear glazed door, whereby the glazed door is set back from the features projecting out to either side so that only limited daylight and a narrow aspect remain. Therefore the proposed extension, in

conjunction with the adjacent projection, would have an unacceptably overbearing effect resulting in a significant loss of outlook. Although the first-floor extension would be set further back from the boundary with No 12, due to its height and depth it would exacerbate the overbearing effect of the single-storey extension.

14. I acknowledge that no windows are proposed on the north-east facing elevation of the first-floor extension, and so there would be no unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy to the occupiers of No 12.
15. Nonetheless, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 12 with particular regard to the loss of outlook. It is therefore contrary to policy 15 of the CS and policy 31 of the DM. These policies seek to ensure, amongst other things, that small household extensions will need to be designed to protect neighbour amenity, and that residential extensions should result in no significant loss of amenity to adjoining houses. It is also contrary to the SPD, which advises that development should respect the amenities of neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

16. I acknowledge that the extension would provide additional accommodation for the appellant and his family, however this benefit cannot outweigh the permanent harm the development would cause for the reasons given above.
17. Consequently, having had regard to all other matters raised, I find that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and area, and to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 12 Pagnell Road, contrary to the aforementioned development plan policies. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Oliver Blower

Appointed Person