

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2017

by David Spencer BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3179045
38 Callander Road, Catford, London SE6 2QD

- 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 M Green against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/17/099717; dated 9 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of No.38 Callander Road and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. Callander Road is a wide, spacious residential street where the housing is set back from the highway. The housing is generally arranged into two storey semi-detached pairs where the intervening space between the pairs of houses is typically occupied by modest single storey structures and on occasion a slender footway for rear access. This arrangement provides for regular visual gaps so that the original pattern of semi-detached dwellings is clearly discernible including a sense of openness across rear gardens beyond.
4. The appeal site positively represents the original pattern of semi-detached housing and the character of spaciousness at Callander Road being one half of a largely unaltered pair with No.40. Whilst I observed the box dormer on the rear roof of No.38, from the public realm there remains a notable symmetry in the appearance of the pair including the shared central front gable. I also observed that the single storey flat roof side elements are retained at both the appeal site and 36 Callander Road thus maintaining the conceived degree of separation between dwellings and the sense of openness around the individual pairs of semi-detached dwellings.
5. The proposed side extension would be set down from the main ridge and back from the front building line. It would, however, extend at first floor level fully across existing single storey side element to create a two storey flank wall close to the boundary with No.36. The proposed roof has been designed to be hipped and set back slightly so that it terminates at eaves level to a small parapet. Notwithstanding the modest set down and back and the hipped roof

form the proposed extension would nonetheless visually fill-in the gap to the side of No.38 and create a conspicuously larger dwelling across the width of the plot. The scale and form of the proposed extension would harmfully unbalance the appearance of the semi-detached pair and would result in a form of development that would represent a harmfully enclosing terraced effect. In my view, the appeal proposal would unacceptably erode the original planned form of spaciouly set semi-detached suburban housing at this location.

6. The appellant submits that the proposal would be in accordance with the requirements for side extensions in the Lewisham Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2012. However, section 6.5 describes the 300mm set back as a minimum which may need to vary considerably depending on the nature of the urban form of the street. In my view the scale of setback and the overall scale of the proposal would be insufficient to achieve the architectural subordination necessary given the urban form described above.
7. I recognise that the appeal proposal would meet some of the policy criteria identified by the appellant but this would not overcome my fundamental concerns that the scale and width of the appeal proposal at first floor level would not respond appropriately to the local character. This includes the characteristic pairing at Nos. 38 and 40 and the clear single storey separation and gap between Nos.38 and 36. As the appellant points out, and as I observed, there are properties on Callander Road where two storey side extensions of varying scales and designs have been implemented. I have very few details about their planning history or whether they were permitted within the current development plan framework. I observed that such extensions are not the majority such that the original spacious semi-detached character prevails. In any event the effect of these extensions on the character and appearance of the locality does not persuade me that they should set the pattern for development on Callander Road.
8. I therefore conclude that the appeal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of No.38 Callander Road and its surroundings. The proposal would therefore conflict with Lewisham Core Strategy¹ Policy 15 and the Development Management Local Plan² (the DM Local Plan) DM Policy 30 which seek to ensure a high quality of design. It would also conflict with DM Local Plan Policy DM31 which requires development proposals for extensions to be site specific and complement the form, setting and detailing of the original buildings. It therefore follows that the proposal would also be contrary to the objective of the National Planning Policy Framework to secure high quality design, including being responsive to local character.
9. For the reasons above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Spencer

Inspector.

¹ Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011

² Lewisham Local Development Framework Development Management Local Plan 2014