

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2017

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons), MCD, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3181415

2 Houston Road, London, SE23 2RN

- 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 Ms Sue Peat against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/17/100743 dated 17 March 2017 was refused by notice dated 11 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as a single storey side extension and first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application form states that work has already commenced. For clarity, I am dealing with the appeal based on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an end-terrace property which is situated on the southern side of Houston Road. The road bends to the west of the site but is otherwise wide and generally straight with properties situated on broadly consistent building lines behind low and open front boundaries. These factors, alongside the presence of trees and vegetation in front gardens, gives the area an open and spacious character.
 5. The proposal seeks permission for extensions to the side of the property comprising of part ground floor, part first floor and part two storey structures. The extensions would have varying widths due to the tapering nature of the side boundary where it widens to the rear. The resulting two storey elements would be set back from the main front elevation and would also be set down from the ridge-line. Whilst this would ensure subservience to the host building, it would nevertheless extend across much of the width of the plot. There may
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be specific policy limitations to the width of semi-detached and detached properties rather than terrace properties, but I do not consider the retained space to the side of the building would be adequate, even when taking into consideration the shape of the appeal site and that of the existing ground floor extension.

6. The adjacent property to the west is a rendered flat roof property where the built form and forward positioning stands in contrast to the other dwellings around it. Notwithstanding this neighbouring property's prominence, I do not consider the proposal would appear inconspicuous. The closing of the gap would reduce views to the rear, between the appeal property and the neighbour at No. 2C and harm the open character of the area. The reduced separation would also create an unduly close relationship and extenuate the different forms of these two neighbouring properties to the detriment of the streetscene.
7. I acknowledge that the proposed hip-end roof of the first-floor element of the development generally reflect the roof forms of properties in the area. However, overall the proposal would have a complex roof structure resulting from extensions with varying widths and differing roof slopes. I appreciate that the existing ground floor extension has influenced the design of the first-floor element but the proposal would, for the aforementioned reasons, harm the generally simple form of the appeal terrace and appear as a discordant feature in the streetscene.
8. I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would conflict with Core Strategy Policy 15 of the Council's Core Strategy and DM Policy 30 and DM Policy 31 of the Development Management Local Plan, which seek the highest quality design which responds to local character. The proposal would also conflict with the Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document and paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that permission should be refused for poor design.

Other Matters

9. I have taken into account the representations in relation to effect of the proposal on the living conditions of a neighbouring property's occupants and parking. The Council have, however, not raised any unacceptable concerns in these respects and I have no reason to disagree. The proposal would also not affect any trees. These are however, all neutral considerations and are not matters, which weigh in favour of the proposal.
10. The proposal would bring benefits to accessibility to mobility impaired persons and in respect of energy efficiency. These matters would not outweigh the substantial harm that would be caused by the development to the character and appearance of the host property and the area. I have had regard to all other matters raised but none lead me to a different conclusion.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and having taken into account all other matters raised, including reference to modifications from the original scheme, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

F Rafiq INSPECTOR