
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2017

by Geoff Underwood BA(Hons) PGDip(Urb Cons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 7 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/17/3180155
112 Woodyates Road, Lee, London SE12 9JL

- 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 Dominic Arnolda against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/17/099803, dated 13 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey side extension & dormer extension to rear roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 2 storey side extension & dormer extension to rear roof slope at 112 Woodyates Road, Lee, London SE12 9JL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/17/099803, dated 13 January 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with approved plan 16/1696 Rev A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the flank window in the dormer extension has been fitted with obscured glazing, and no part of that window that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which it is installed shall be capable of being opened. Once installed the obscured glazing shall be retained thereafter.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect the side extension would have on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is situated at the end of a short terrace of four dwellings in an area characterised by a mixture of short terraces and semi-detached dwellings of similar appearance with hipped roofs. These short blocks and pairs of houses are largely separated from one another by clear gaps above ground

floor level which contributes to a spacious character between buildings and a distinct rhythm in the streetscene.

4. The proposed extension would extend at first floor level into the space which currently exists between the flank elevation of the property and that of its neighbour next door at 114 Woodyates Road. However, this gap is considerably narrower than those which predominate in the area as a result of a previous extension to the flank of No 114. These circumstances set the context of the appeal site apart from the majority of other nearby properties in that the characteristic spacing has been significantly eroded.
5. The existing extension at No 114 would mean that the two would be very close to one another at first floor level, in contrast to the generally prevailing relationship between properties. However, the proposed extension would be set back from the front elevation of the host property and No 114. Whilst the resulting extension would effectively appear as filling the gap between the host property and its neighbour at first floor level, the hipped roofs, separated at eaves level by a low parapet on the appeal proposal, would slope away from one another. Its roof would have a lower ridge and would be set back from the front roof plane. The extent of these differentiations would be relatively subtle but nevertheless would provide the clear break between the existing building and new work which criterion 2. a. of Local Plan¹ Policy 31 requires to maintain architectural subordination in side extensions.
6. I note that neither this Policy nor paragraph 6.7 of the Council's Residential Standards guidance² explicitly seek to avoid a terracing effect, albeit that the supporting text to Local Plan Policy 30 identifies the maintenance of spaces between short terraces as an issue in areas with a suburban terrace character. Whilst the extension would make Nos 112 and 114 visually much closer together above ground floor level, I have taken the particular context of the existing extension at No 114 into account. Whilst the Council point out that No 114's extension was approved a considerable time ago and prior to current development plan policies and guidance, it nevertheless forms part of the established, if unusual, immediate context of the appeal site.
7. Therefore, the development's effects on the architectural integrity of the group of buildings and features of the area would be markedly more limited in the context of the existing arrangement at No 114. Consequently the proposal would not materially harm the area's character and appearance and would accord with Local Plan Policy 31 as well as with the character and design requirements of Local Plan Policy 30 and Core Strategy³ Policy 15.

Other Matter

8. Whilst the proposed dormer window would provide a window at an elevated level compared to existing rear windows I do not consider that this would materially increase the extent of overlooking of adjoining properties and their rear gardens above that which already exists. Coupled with the distances which separate properties to the rear and intervening planting I do not consider that the living conditions of neighbours would be harmed as a result. I note that the Council have reached a similar conclusion in this respect.

¹ Lewisham local development framework - Development Management Local Plan, 2014.

² Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document, 2012.

³ Lewisham local development framework - Core Strategy, Development plan document, 2011.

Conditions

9. Specifying the approved drawing is necessary to provide certainty. Requiring materials to match the host building will preserve the appearance of the area. Although indicated on the approved drawing, it is necessary to require the flank window in the dormer to contain obscure glass to protect neighbours' privacy.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, the development would not materially harm the character and appearance of the area and would accord with the Development Plan. The appeal is therefore allowed.

Geoff Underwood

INSPECTOR