



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 October 2019

by S Hanson BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/19/3233318

Flat C, 119 George Lane, Hither Green, London SE13 6HP

- 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 Peter Smith against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/19/112193, dated 8 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is a loft extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a first floor flat contained within a two-storey semi-detached property in a residential area. It is located on the north side of George Lane close to the junction with Fordyce Road from which its rear elevation is clearly visible. There are various examples of roof alterations within the surrounding area where some are more successful than others.
4. Policy DM 30 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Development Management Local Plan (2014) (DMLP) requires all alterations and extensions to existing buildings to attain a high standard of design. Policy DM 31 of the DMLP states that roof extensions will generally not be permitted where the extension is not set back into the roof slope or causes an incongruous element in terms of the features of a character area. The essence of the policy aims to protect views from public spaces of obtrusive development.
5. When considering alterations to roof spaces, Lewisham Local Plan Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (SPD) recommends that dormers are set in from the party wall on each side by at least 0.3m, below the ridgeline by a minimum of 0.3m and at least 0.3m above the existing eaves line. It emphasises the importance of the arrangement of windows and the use of high-quality materials so that any extension to the roof is architecturally competent and appropriate to the host dwelling and its surroundings.

6. The proposed loft conversion works would include 2 front roof lights and a flat roof, box-shaped rear dormer with two sash style windows. The proposed roof extension would comply with the guided space identified within the SPD, achieving the minimum distances from the party wall and eaves. However, the top of the dormer would sit at the same level as the 'table top' section of the roof of the host dwelling, which would conflict with the SPD guidance.
7. Furthermore, due to its size, the proposal would result in a combined flat-roofed structure of considerable bulk and projection. It would lack architectural subtlety in its box-like design and would result in an addition that would not be subordinate to the main roof slope. The proposed roof extension would appear considerably larger than the existing roof dormer on the neighbouring property and would be a visually dominant addition to the host dwelling. This would not be mitigated using complementary roof materials on the face and cheeks or by raising the height of the proposed dormer to match its neighbour.
8. Views towards the rear of the property are achieved from the public realm and from neighbouring properties. Whilst the effect would be relatively localised in terms of wider views from the street, it would nevertheless diminish the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area in an unacceptable manner.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the wider street scene. This would be contrary to Policies DM 30 and DM 31 of the DMLP, Policy 15 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011) and the SPD. Together, these seek the highest quality design in new development and extensions to enhance the street scene and residential character.

Other Matters

10. The Council did not object to the front rooflights, and from the information before me and my observations on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree. However, this does not alter my decision.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Hanson

INSPECTOR