



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2020

by JP Tudor BA (Hons), Solicitor (non-practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/19/3241050

11 Vibart Gardens, London SW2 3RJ

- 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 M Papamarkou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref: 19/01568/FUL, dated 27 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of first-floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have taken the description of development used in the banner heading above from the planning application form. In its decision notice the Council appears to have changed the description of development to include reference to '*an additional storey above the roof*'. However, as the Council confirms, that additional storey already benefits from planning permission under reference 19/00056/FUL.¹ Although the extra storey is shown on the plans submitted with the appeal proposal, the notation confirms that is on the basis that permission for it has already been granted.
3. Given the above, it is not clear to me why the Council has chosen to alter the description of development or that such a change was agreed. Section E of the appellant's appeal form indicates that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, adopts the description used by the Council in their decision notice. However, the appellant inserts words confirming that the additional storey above the roof was granted permission on 2 April 2019. Neither party has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development was agreed. Therefore, I have used the description given in the original application.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the terrace and the area.

¹ Granted on 2 April 2019

Reasons

5. The appeal dwelling is a two-storey mid-terrace house of modern design in a residential area. It already has a full-width single storey ground floor rear extension. The house forms part of a development of properties of similar contemporary design on a purpose-built estate. They have staggered building lines which creates some visual interest.
6. It is proposed to erect a rear extension at first floor level, which would sit atop the flat roof of the ground floor extension. Although the new addition would be set back from the front of the existing extension, it would span the full width of the property and project out about 1.5m from the rear elevation. Given its span and elevated position it would add noticeable visual bulk to the building.
7. Moreover, in combination with the sizeable existing ground floor extension, it would effectively create a two-storey full-width rear extension, albeit recessed at first floor level. Paragraph (f) of Policy Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan (LLP)² indicates that full-width two-storey rear extensions will normally be resisted where they dominate the host building and fail to appear subordinate to it. In this case, the cumulative effect of the existing and proposed additions would be to dominate the host building, completely subsuming its original rear elevation.
8. Furthermore, the extant permission for an additional storey, referred to above, which was being constructed at the time of my site visit, would already add significantly to the scale of the property. I appreciate that the Council considers such additional storeys to be acceptable, in principle, on this purpose-built estate of relatively modest houses to provide additional living space. However, the overall result of a full-width first floor extension, on top of an existing large ground floor addition and below the approved new extra storey, would be to overwhelm the modest form of the original building, to its detriment.
9. While the appellant says that the depth would match the stagger in the building line at Nos 8 and 9, the combined effect of the existing, approved and proposed changes would make the host building appear markedly larger than neighbouring properties along the terrace and most in the immediate area, creating a sense of visual disharmony.
10. Although the extension would be to the rear, it would be visible from the rear windows and gardens of numerous surrounding properties. There would also be some views, albeit limited, of the upper floors of the house across rear gardens from the public highway to the west. While the proposed green roofs would potentially be a positive feature, subject to maintenance, they would not sufficiently mitigate or outweigh the negative visual effects.
11. Overall therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the terrace and the area. It follows that the proposal would be contrary to LLP policies Q5 and Q11 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that the design of development reinforces positive elements of local character and distinctiveness, and that two-storey full-width extensions should generally be resisted where they unacceptably dominate or overwhelm the host building.

² Adopted September 2015

Other Matters

12. Although I understand that a revised scheme has subsequently been submitted to the Council, I have considered the proposal before me on its individual merits.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

JP Tudor

INSPECTOR