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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020

**by C Osgathorp BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 11 August 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/19/3243452**  
**70 Strathbrook Road, London SW16 3AZ**

- 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 Leach against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
  - The application Ref 19/02814/FUL, dated 30 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 November 2019.
  - The development proposed is roof alterations to incorporate rear and side dormer loft conversion.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matter

2. The description of proposed development shown on the Council's decision notice and the appellant's appeal form is different to that shown on the planning application form. I have not been provided with written confirmation that a revised description has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the description given in the planning application form in the heading above.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area.

### Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2 storey dwelling located in the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area (the CA). The dwellings at Nos 70 and 72 have a symmetrical form arising from the hipped roof; prominent chimneys; front porches and the arrangement of windows. The overall composition provides a pleasant appearance, which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Paragraph 193 of the Framework states that "*great weight should be given to the [designated heritage] asset's conservation*".

6. The proposed side dormer window would not be set down from the ridge of the main roof, and it would create a long ridgeline that would extend close to the boundary with No 68. Consequently, the proposed dormer window, owing to its excessive size, would not appear subordinate to the host dwelling. It would appear bulky and unbalance the symmetrical form of Nos 70 and 72. Furthermore, tall decorative chimneys are a prominent feature in the street scene and they contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. The close proximity of the proposed side dormer window would significantly reduce the sky background of the chimneys between Nos 68 and 70, which would diminish the prominence of the chimneys and therefore impact negatively on the CA.
7. The proposed rear dormer window would cover nearly the full height of the main roof and would not be set down from the ridge. Taken together with its sizeable width, the proposed rear dormer would appear bulky and would fail to respect the scale and proportions of the main roof. Whilst the bulky appearance of the dormer window would not be conspicuous in the street scene, it would nevertheless be visible from neighbouring properties. In any event, the lack of visibility from the public realm does not obviate the need to achieve good design.
8. I acknowledge that some properties in the area have hip to gable roof extensions, side dormer windows or rear dormer windows<sup>1</sup>, however I am unaware of the planning history of those properties. Whilst some of the neighbouring roof alterations are bulky and have disrupted the balance of buildings, I do not consider that they should be replicated due to the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the CA.
9. Having regard to the above, the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the CA. In accordance with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), any harm should be weighed against the public benefits. Great weight should be given to an asset's conservation. I appreciate that there would be a benefit to the appellant to provide additional family living accommodation, however this would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the CA.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the CA. It would therefore be contrary to Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2016, Policies Q5, Q11 and Q22 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2015, Chapters 12 and 16 of the Framework and guidance in the Lambeth Building Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2015), which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development is of high quality design and preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas.

### **Other Matters**

11. I appreciate that the appellant has suggested a condition to reduce the ridgeline of the proposed rear dormer, however this would be likely to materially change the proposal and I cannot be certain that such a condition would overcome the harm that I have identified. Furthermore, I am very conscious of the Wheatcroft Principles derived from *Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v*

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<sup>1</sup> As referred to in the appellant's appeal statement.

SSE (1982) which are further explained in the Procedural Guide: Planning Appeals – England.

12. It is my firm view, in the interests of fairness, that this appeal must be determined on the basis of the plans on which the Council made its decision, and which have been subject to consultation. To do otherwise could prejudice unacceptably the interests of interested people and/or consultees who would not have been consulted on amended proposals and who may have observations to make.

### **Conclusion**

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

*C Osgathorp*

INSPECTOR