



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2020

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/19/3229070

1 Wickham Gardens, London SE4 1LY

- 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 Tim Shaw against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/18/108923, dated 12 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2018.
 - The development proposed is the partial demolition of the existing building, construction of new three storey, three bedroomed family dwelling, including alterations to boundary and creation of a dormer to the rear roofslope of existing building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Brockley Conservation Area (the Conservation Area) and on the living conditions of future occupiers, with particular regard to floor space provision.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The part of Wickham Gardens that falls within the Conservation Area mainly accommodates linked houses which date from the second half of the 19th Century and which are of attractive appearance. The detailing, scale, form and materials of these properties are defining features of the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.
4. The proposal would see the removal of the eastern wing of the house and its replacement with an attached three storey dwelling of modern appearance and design which would be of increased height, mass and bulk. While acknowledging the wing may not be original to the property, the evidence indicates that it is of substantial age. It is also of attractive appearance and its architectural approach including corbelling, window proportions, heads, cills and materials are reflective of the main body of the property.
5. The wing can be viewed from both Wickham Gardens and the lane which runs to the east of the site. It has a slightly plainer appearance compared to the detailed main front elevation of the host property and the set down of the roof lines further afford it a subtle, subordinate and integrated appearance. It therefore has a traditional, attractive appearance which is complimentary to the main body of the

dwelling therefore making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6. Subsequently, the loss of the wing and its replacement with a dwelling of more modern and contemporary appearance would detract from the appearance of the property. It would detract from the heritage significance of this part of the Conservation Area which lies largely in the detailing, scale, form and materials of the properties on Wickham Gardens.
7. The harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires such harm to be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.
8. The benefits of this scheme would arise through the provision of an additional dwelling. However, such benefits would be limited given the small scale of the scheme. I acknowledge that the new dwelling would have a slight set back within the street scene, however it would have a high degree of visibility from the public realm overall. Given the statutory protection afforded to conservation areas, such benefit would be insufficient to outweigh this harm.
9. Consequently, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area contrary to Policy 15 of the Lewisham Core Strategy (2011) (LCS), Policies 30, 31, 32, 33 and 36 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014) (DMLP) and Policies 7.4 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016) (LP) which amongst other things seek the protection of heritage assets and development appropriate to local character.

Living conditions

10. Policy 3.5 of the LP sets out that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context and to the wider environment. Table 3.3 of the Policy provides minimum space standards and requires a minimum gross internal area of 99m² for a three-bedroom, five-person, three-storey dwelling.
11. A further floor area calculation has been submitted alongside the appeal. The total combined floor space when adding that which would be available on the ground, first and seconds floors would be greater than the original figure calculated by the Council. However, the total floorspace would amount to 98.864m², which would be less than the required 99m². Whilst I accept that this would represent a very minor shortfall, that which would be provided falls short of the requirement that is set as a minimum figure, which developers are encouraged to exceed. The appeal proposal would therefore result in cramped accommodation which would not be the high-quality housing sought. Consequently, the property would fail to provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers.
12. The appeal proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy 15 of the LCS, Policy 32 of the DMLP and Policy 3.5 of the LP which amongst other things require housing of a high quality which provides acceptable living conditions for future occupiers.

Conclusion

13. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR