

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 November 2020

by David Fitzsimon MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 December 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/20/3257958

62 Manor Avenue, London SE4 1TE

- 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 Christopher Philips against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/20/116389, dated 31 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is a 'second floor extension with pitched roof and internal alterations to the first, second and third floors'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Brockley Conservation Area within which it sits.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to an imposing 3 storey (plus basement) Victorian townhouse which sits at the end of a terrace of four similar properties. Manor Avenue is home to many similar terraced rows, with the end properties having two storey (plus basement) sections set back from the principal elevation accommodating a raised entrance. These buildings are attractive and their general uniformity is noticeable and makes a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of Brockley Conservation Area (CA) within which they sit.
 4. The proposal seeks to add an additional storey above the existing recessed two storey section. The proposed extension would be finished in matching external materials and the window proportioning and detailing would be appropriate. However, I consider the existing recessed section with its distinctive parapet roof to be an integral part of the overall design of the existing building, which makes an important contribution to its overall character and appearance.
 5. Although set down from the ridge of the main building, the hipped roof of the proposed extension would fundamentally alter the scale, form and proportions
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of this section of the dwelling and harmfully alter its overall appearance. Whilst not identical examples, my concern in this respect is underlined by the additional floors which have been added to the two storey sections of other similar end of terrace dwellings at Nos. 69, 70 and 76 Manor Avenue.

6. Given the overall height of the buildings, combined with the restricted width of the road, it is difficult to view both ends of the terrace of dwellings at the same time. I also accept that the additional floor added to the two storey section at the side of No. 68 Manor Avenue has, to a degree, affected the overall symmetry of the terrace. Nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that the proposal before me would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling. The harm would be widely visible from the public domain and it would detract from the overall character and appearance of the CA.
7. The harm to the CA as a heritage asset would be 'less than substantial' as directed by the Planning Practice Guidance. However, I attach considerable importance and weight to the statutory duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework explains that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It goes on to say that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. The Appellant has not suggested that the proposal generates any public benefits. The Appellant does, however, point to the fact that the extension would improve the space within the dwelling, but this is a given. I am also mindful that the scheme has not generated any local opposition but this is a neutral factor in the overall planning balance.

Overall Conclusion

10. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the CA within which it sits, contrary to policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan, policies 15 and 16 of the adopted Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies 30, 31 and 36 of the Council's adopted Development Management Local Plan, along with the adopted Supplementary Planning Document titled '*Alterations and Extensions*'; which collectively promote high quality design and seek to preserve or enhance heritage assets.
11. The arguments advanced by the Appellant in favour of the scheme do not outweigh this harm and policy conflict, therefore the appeal does not succeed.

David Fitzsimon

INSPECTOR