



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 September 2021

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/21/3272560

6 Halifax Street, London SE26 6JA

- 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 Kay Fox against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/20/119298, dated 23 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing rear single storey extension and the construction of a part one/part two storey rear extension at 6 Halifax Street, SE26 including replacement timber sash windows in all elevations and the resiting of the first floor rear window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Revised versions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the London Plan have been published since the appeal was lodged. The Council has provided copies of the policies of the new London Plan which it considers to be relevant to the proposal. Both main parties have had the opportunity to comment on any relevant implications for this appeal.
3. The description of the development provided on the planning application form has been replaced by an amended version on the decision notice and in subsequent appeal documents. I consider that subsequent description to accurately represent the proposal and I have therefore used it within this decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, with due regard to the Halifax Street Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

5. The appeal property consists of a small 2-storey detached cottage. It is located in a CA which mainly consists of a single street with a variety of buildings of a semi-rural character. The significance of the CA primarily derives from the street frontages of the modest cottages. The contribution of the rear of the cottages to the CA has been compromised to a degree by a number of unsympathetic additions.

6. In respect of the appeal site, there is an unsympathetic flat roofed rear extension on the ground floor, although this does allow the form of the first floor and roof of the dwelling to be appreciated. Windows of a modern design also detract from the appearance of the cottage. However, the upper floor and roof of the rear elevation are largely unaltered, and the original symmetrical form of the dwelling is apparent and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. Although the rear of the appeal site is not readily visible from the street, it is apparent from the rear of neighbouring properties and a private court to the rear serving a number of dwellings.
7. The proposed first floor extension would project to the eaves of the roof and continue the roof slope. However, this would not sit comfortably with the projecting eaves of the roof, and would appear as an incongruous and contrived addition to the building. This would also detract from the pleasing symmetrical arrangement of the first floor and roof of the building.
8. The ridge of the ground floor extension would also project above the lower edge of the sill of the relocated rear window, which would add to the awkward appearance of the extension.
9. When viewed as a whole, the extension would dominate the rear elevation of the dwelling, and the unsympathetic elements of the design would lead to an unduly incongruous appearance.
10. The appellant refers to 2-storey extensions on neighbouring properties, and that the proposal would fill in a gap created by the lack of such extensions on the appeal site. However, a number of these extensions served to confirm the detrimental impact of such unsympathetic extensions. The roof slope of the proposed first floor extension takes some design cues from the dwellings at 2 and 4 Halifax Street. However, the roofs of those dwellings are of a different gable design to the appeal site, and the rear offshoots are sympathetically located within the rear elevations. They therefore do not justify the design and location of the appeal proposal.
11. The removal of the existing rear extension would be a benefit of the scheme, but this would not justify the unsympathetic design and extent of the proposal. The replacement of the windows of the dwelling with a more suitable design would also be a benefit, although this improvement is not reliant on the proposed extension and therefore carries limited weight in favour of the proposal as a whole. I was able to view the gradient of the rear garden with reference to the submitted plans, but this did not lead me to a different conclusion in respect of the harm arising from the proposal.
12. I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and, consequently, would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, which require development to enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards local character.
13. The proposal would also conflict with Policies 15 and 16 of the Council's Core Strategy 2011 and Policies 30 and 36 of the Development Management Local Plan 2014. These policies seek high quality design which conserves and enhances heritage assets, contributes to local distinctiveness, and to resist

alterations and extensions to existing buildings which would be incompatible with the special characteristics of the area.

14. Whilst the harm to the CA would be less than substantial within the terms of paragraph 202 of the Framework, I am required to give great weight to the conservation of the CA as a heritage asset, and there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm that I have identified. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the Framework with regards to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
15. The proposal would also be contrary to the Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2019 which advises that designs need to be well thought out and sensitive to their context, particularly in conservation areas. The proposal would also conflict with the detailed advice in respect of the relationship between the ridge of the roof of ground floor extensions and first floor windows.
16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR