



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2022

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/22/3293532

96 Somertrees Avenue, Grove Park, London SE12 0BY

- 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 Hua Zhang against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref: DC/21/123855 dated 12 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is ground floor front & side with rear extension with pitch roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed in so far as it relates to proposed ground floor front extension with pitch roof.
2. The appeal is allowed in so far as it relates to proposed ground floor side with rear extension with pitch roof and planning permission is granted for proposed ground floor side with rear extension with pitch roof at 96 Somertrees Avenue, Grove Park, London SE12 0BY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref : DC/21/123855 dated 12 October 2021, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted, in so far as it relates to the new ground floor side and rear extensions, shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: A00 Rev A; A01 Rev B; A02 Rev B; A03 Rev B; A04 Rev B; A05 Rev B.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

3. The Council's reason for refusal is specific to one element of the proposal, namely the proposed ground floor front extension and the Officer's report confirms that there is no issue with the proposed side and rear extensions. From my site visit and from all the representations before me, I have no reason to take a different view in respect of the proposed side and rear

extensions. Accordingly, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed front extension on the character and appearance of the existing property and on the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is the end of a terrace of four properties on the west side of Somertrees Avenue within a predominantly residential area. The terrace has had a number of alterations, particularly to the appeal property, including a change to the roof form, bay windows to the main windows to the front and an enclosed porch under a pitched roof, serving the appeal property and its neighbour. The street scene on this side of the road in the vicinity of the appeal property, comprises a number of groups of properties, of different designs but generally with unaltered front elevations, except for small enclosed and open porches.
5. The proposal would replace the existing front porch to the appeal property with a single storey front extension, incorporating a porch, along the full width of the property, under a pitched roof. The Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2019 advises at Section 4.6 that modern projections beyond the established building line can be highly disruptive elements within the streetscape. Whilst acknowledging that many porches may be covered under permitted development, it goes on to note that *extensions to the front of buildings are rarely desirable as they are highly visible in the street scene; can unbalance a building; create undue prominence and/or disrupt the continuity of a terrace or group.*
6. Whilst the existing porch interrupts the unified appearance of the terrace, the proposed front extension would be larger, particularly in terms of its width across the front of the building. Given its siting and scale, as a full width extension, it would not complement the proportions and form of the existing dwelling. It would also appear visually discordant in relation to the rest of the terrace and as a result it would be an overly prominent and incongruous feature in the street scene.
7. I therefore consider that the proposed front extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing property and the street scene. It would conflict with Policy 15 of the Lewisham Core Strategy 2011, Policies DM30 and DM31 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan 2014 and the Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2019 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework, and in particular Section 12, all of which, amongst other matters, seek a high quality of design which respects the local context.

Conditions

8. I agree with the conditions suggested by the Council, in respect of that part of the development I am approving. Matching materials to the existing house are required to respect the character and appearance of the existing house and local area. A condition to list the approved plans is also required for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in so far as it relates to the

proposed ground floor side and rear extensions but dismissed in so far as it relates to the proposed ground floor front extension.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR