



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 September 2022

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 NOVEMBER 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/22/3300848

73 Micheldever Road, London SE12 8LU

- 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 & Mrs Morrison-Pan Cabo against the decision of the Council for the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/125142, dated 19 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is ground floor single storey rear extension, loft extension including dormer windows to rear roof slope and conservation roof lights to front and side roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Lee Manor Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the southern portion of the CA. The host dwelling is illustrative of the two-storey traditional terraced properties that characterise the immediate area. Finishing materials are predominantly yellow stock brick with slate grey roofs and various period features. End terrace properties, including the host dwelling, typically feature a hipped roof design.
4. Contemporary additions, including single storey rear extensions and rear dormer windows, can be found throughout the area, of varying degrees of prominence and aesthetic integration. Nevertheless, the CA remains generally well-preserved. In traditional proportions, materials and arrangements, the dwellings along this part of Micheldever Road, including No 73, contribute to its significance and overall visual and historic coherence.
5. The appeal proposal would include two dormer windows of differing sizes, on the rear roof slope of the host dwelling. Due to their position to the rear, they would have little effect on the street scene along Micheldever Road. I saw on site however that the rear roof slopes of dwellings along this end of Micheldever Road, including the host dwelling, can be observed from Manor Lane, albeit with some limited screening from existing trees.
6. The general form of the proposed dormers, particularly the smaller of the two, and the proposed window style, is somewhat conventional. Finishing materials are more contemporary and divergent however, as is the width of the larger

dormer. Given the host dwelling's hipped roof design, combined they would occupy a considerable proportion of the rear facing roof slope. The larger dormer would abut the sloping hip of the roof, and its width would give it a somewhat horizontal emphasis, at odds with the vertical emphasis of the existing windows below. Both dormers would sit further forward towards the roof eaves than those of the adjoining dwelling, and the lack of symmetry between the two is not reflective of other examples of dormer pairs in the area.

7. The Lewisham Local Plan Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out guidance for rear dormers and rear roof extensions, the latter concerning more considerable additions. For rear dormer windows, the SPD advises these should either be of traditional form or demonstrate exceptional architectural quality, and in conservation areas should sit well clear of the ridge and eaves and be centrally placed or aligned with windows below the roof. For larger rear roof extensions, the SPD advises a modern, high-quality design is generally more successful, though should equally be set in significantly from the eaves, ridge and sides. The SPD also seeks to ensure proposals do not contribute to a group of mismatched roof forms by taking into consideration neighbouring roof extensions.
8. Given the approach to their design and disparate sizing, the proposed dormers appear to sit somewhat uncomfortably between the two forms of development described above. In my judgement they would fail to successfully provide either a traditional approach sensitive to the host building and character of the area, or a contemporary one that provides a sufficiently innovative or creative solution, in line with the SPD. The proposed dormers would together appear as a noticeable top-heavy addition that is unsympathetic to the host dwelling and out of keeping with similar dormers in the area. The proposal would therefore detract from the prevailing character and appearance of the CA.
9. The appellant has highlighted several examples of dormer extensions along Micheldever Road in support of the appeal. The full details of each are not before me. However, from the information provided and my own observations, they appear materially different to the appeal proposal and site context. Nos 44, 67 and 75 are all mid-terrace dwellings. I saw that the triple dormers at Nos 42 and 44 are more modest in size, with vertical emphasis and single width windows. The dormers at No 52 are symmetrical and less visible from surrounding streets, while those at No 75 are symmetrical and smaller than the appeal proposal. The approved development at No 67 is of a more distinctive contemporary design, and the existing dormer at No 81 is set off the roof hip.
10. Two recent appeal decisions at 64 Manor Lane and 109 Brightfield Road are also referred to. Again, 109 Brightfield Road is a different context being a more constrained mid-terrace dwelling, and both are more overtly contemporary in their design, with the inspector finding 64 Manor Lane to be SPD compliant. Ultimately, these examples are not directly comparable to the appeal before me, and each proposal must be considered on its own merits.
11. In the above context, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, including the CA, the preservation and enhancement of which I apportion great weight to. It would therefore not accord with the clear expectations of statute in this respect¹.

¹ Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

12. The proposal therefore also does not comply with Policies 15 and 16 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document, Adopted June 2011, and DM Policies 30, 31 and 36 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Development Management Local Plan, Adopted 26 November 2014. These policies, amongst other things, seek to protect the historic environment, including the significance of conservation areas, and require a high standard of design that, for residential extensions, respects or complements the original building and the character of the area. The proposal is also contrary to relevant guidance within the SPD, set out in detail above.
13. With respect to paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework, less than substantial harm would be caused to the significance of the CA, which is a designated heritage asset. The proposal would appear from the evidence provided to be advantageous to the appellant, however there would be insufficient public benefits to outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR