



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2022

by S Lo LLB M.SRA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/22/3300512

14 Shearman Road, Blackheath, London, SE3 9HX

- 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 Laura Chappell against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/125596, dated 21 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2022.
 - The development proposed a two-storey side extension and proposed new porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a two-storey end of terrace dwellinghouse which is located next to Shearman Road and the adjacent footway. The proposed development would extend onto the small strip of green space to the front of the dwellinghouse. This green space is characteristic of the area and contributes to the soft-landscaped and open character of the local neighbourhood.
4. The area has an open design and is predominantly made up of a mixture of terraced and semi-detached residential buildings, which date from the 1960's. The proposed development would extend towards the footway at the front of the property by 3.7 metres. The two-storey extension would add considerable bulk and height to the front of the property, which would be exacerbated due to the prominence of the location of the appeal site. Specifically, the extension would extend forward close to the footway and in this sense, would become a more visible presence in views from surrounding properties along Sherman Road. I find that due to its height, length and prominence, the proposed development would form a large, obtrusive and incongruous feature in the street scene, which would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of development.
5. In reaching this view, I have considered the fact that a hedge has been planted to create a screening effect at the front of the property, which is likely to increase as the hedging matures and thickens. However, notwithstanding the

potential screening effect of the hedge, the extension would still read as a prominent and discordant feature in the streetscene due to its height and bulk.

6. While the green space at the front of the dwellinghouse may be considered private amenity space, this does not fundamentally change the generally open character of the neighbourhood nor indicate that the appeal proposal is acceptable. Accordingly, the loss of this area would be out of keeping with, and harmful to, the appearance of the property and the wider terrace.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would not comply with the criteria for high quality design which is sensitive to the local context, contrary to policy 15 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011). Instead, the proposed development would compromise the urban design of the area and the form of the original building, contrary to policies DM30 and DM 31 of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan Adoption Version (2014). It would also result in development which adds undue prominence to the front of the property, contrary to the Lewisham Alterations and Extensions Supplementary planning document (2019).

Other Matters

8. I have considered representations regarding the impact on the nearby TPO protected tree, as the proposal would encroach into the root protection zone of the Norway Maple. I agree with the Council's assessment that this impact could be addressed by appropriate conditions; however, this does not overcome the harm I have found on the main issue. I have also considered the living conditions of neighbours, but this is not a matter which affects my findings.
9. My attention has been drawn to other appeal decisions which are considered to be similar to the proposal before me. I am not aware of the particular circumstances of those cases; however, I note that the only development where a meaningful comparison could be made is at 10 Foxwood Road. The other appeal decisions do not present sufficiently similar characteristics to find in favour of this appeal. However, at 10 Foxwood Road, as that extension is to the side, not the front, and the dwelling is not on a corner plot, it has not influenced my reasoning. In any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits, and in the context of the current policy regime which requires such additions to respond to local distinctiveness. As such, I have considered these appeal decisions and having considered this appeal proposal on its own merits, and I consider that the proposed development would not be sympathetic to local character, in conflict with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Conclusion

10. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework's provisions, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Lo

INSPECTOR