



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: 22 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/22/3301327

9B St Norbert Road, Lewisham, London, SE4 2EY

- 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 Aron Blau against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/125539, dated 17 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is the construction of an additional second floor incorporating a dormer extension in the rear roof slope at 9B St Norbert Road SE4, to provide 1, 3 bedroom self - contained flat on the first and second floors.
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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 property is a two storey mid-terrace located on St Norbert Road, with the application site being limited to the upper floor which serves as a self-contained flat. The proposal is to convert this one-floor flat into a two-floor duplex flat through the construction of a second floor living area, by utilising existing roof space and the formation of a dormer to the rear of the property.
4. The terraced properties along St Norbert Road and the surrounding area are similar in age and overall Victorian design, albeit several of these properties have been enlarged through dormer extensions. Specifically, I observed the dormer extensions at no 17 and no 25 to be similar or larger to the proposed development. However, whilst such dormers are present along this terrace, the majority of properties do not have extensions. Consequently, they are not a common or characteristic feature of the area.
5. The dormer would add considerable bulk to the roof and would become a visible presence in views from the surrounding properties and flats located opposite, albeit it is unlikely that there would be significant visibility from the front street scene. There would be some limited screening in some angles from nearby trees. However, given the high degree of visibility of the roofscape in the local area, this would not sufficiently address fundamental concerns regarding the failure of the appeal scheme to harmonise with local character.

The proposed development would therefore be at odds with the prevailing character of the area.

6. In reaching this view, I have considered the fact that while a section of the existing space in the loft would be incorporated into the second floor living area, a large dormer extension would be constructed to the rear.
7. The dormer would be set up from the eaves by 0.3m; however, it would not be set down from the ridge. The Council and the Appellant disagree about the distance between this dormer extension and the shared boundary. The appellant refers to a plan (proposed loft floor) which suggests that there would be a 0.3m gap between the dormer and the adjacent neighbouring properties. However, I note that this measurement is between the dormer and the midpoint of the party wall, rather than the edge of the boundary, which I assume is how the Council measured this distance. The measurement from the dormer to the edge of the party wall would be around 0.15m. As shown on the proposed rear elevation plan, this minimal gap would be negligible when viewed from rear.
8. Nonetheless, without a set down from the ridge line and a very minimal set in from the party walls the dormer extension would occupy almost the entirety of the rear roof, which would result in a box-like and bulky appearance. Consequently, as it would be highly visible from surrounding properties, I find that the proposed development would appear as a prominent and discordant feature which would be out of keeping with, and harmful to, the appearance of the property and the wider terrace.
9. The Appellant points out that planning permission has been granted for similar extensions at other properties in the area, such as no 17 St Norbert Road and no 25 St Norbert Road which have been altered to introduce some form of dormer extension at roof level. However, I am not aware of the particular circumstances of those cases. 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. Whilst there are other isolated properties in the area which have been enlarged through dormer extensions, this does not undermine the requirement for the appeal scheme to respect the prevailing local character where such extensions are not a common feature.
10. In conclusion, the appeal scheme would harm the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area and would therefore not comply with the requirement for development to be of high-quality design, contrary to Policy 15 of the Lewisham Core Strategy (2011), paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and DM Policy 30 Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014). The appeal scheme would not complement the form and architectural characteristics of the original building contrary to the DM Policy 31 Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014). It would also not relate to the architectural conventions of the existing building, contrary to the Lewisham Alterations and Extensions SPD (2019).

Other Matters

11. I have considered representations regarding the benefits of providing additional housing in London and the fact that the proposal has already been significantly

modified from a previously submitted application, but these are matters which do not affect my findings on the main issue.

Conclusion

12. I have found that the appeal scheme conflicts with development plan policy and thus find that it would be contrary to the development plan as a whole. No material considerations have been demonstrated which would outweigh the planning development conflict. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Lo

INSPECTOR