



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2023

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/22/3302351

Ground Floor Flat, 38G Lambert Road, Brixton, London SW2 5BE

- 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 Susan Grant-Page against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 21/04820/FUL, dated 11 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension to the ground floor flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a residential flat situated at the ground floor of a three-storey, mid-terrace, period dwelling. At the rear the building's form, including its roofline of differing heights, along with architectural details such as its stock brick construction and arrangement of windows of differing sizes and shapes, provide visual interest.
4. There is some variation to the external appearance of buildings within the terrace, such as through the addition of upward extensions and other modern features. Nevertheless, while building lines vary in other nearby streets, Lambert Road has retained a general consistency to the rear building line of the terrace row. This contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area. This consistency is prominent and obvious from properties in the surrounding streets and their gardens.
5. Elements of the proposal's design are influenced by the architectural style of the host building and the proposal seeks to update the appearance through use of contrasting materials. However, the proposed extension would extend across almost the full width of the appeal property and would have a stepped layout resulting in sections of differing depth. Whilst the proposal would be of lesser volume than other extensions in the area, the proposed extension's irregular form would appear excessively large in scale and thus dominant and insubordinate to the appeal property.

6. By disrupting the building line of the flat rear elevation of the terrace row, the proposed layout would harm the form of the appeal property. The proposal would therefore appear as an out of keeping and incongruous addition which would diminish the local distinctiveness of the appeal property and terrace row.
7. Therefore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area. The proposal would not comply with Policies Q2, Q5, Q8 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2020–2035 (2021) (LLP). These in part require proposals to ensure visual amenity from adjoining sites is not unacceptably compromised, reinforce local distinctiveness and responds positively to aspects of the locality. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to the Building Alterations and Extensions SPD (2015) which requires extension proposals to not dominate the host building or overwhelm its form and composition.
8. The Council has cited a '4 metre' rule which appears to be applied as a general guideline rather than a distinct policy requirement. As set out above, irrespective of the 4m rule and despite the scale of the scheme having been reduced in response to concerns raised by the Council, I have found the proposal's scale, layout and form would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and area.

Other Matters

9. The extensions at Nos 48 and 50 appear lesser in scale than the proposal. Whilst a part of the terrace row, No 32 forms a corner plot which is different in form to the appeal property, notably with the extension forming a part of the street scene of Bonham Road. The examples of other extensions in the area are therefore materially different from the appeal proposal.
10. The proposal would provide additional living accommodation within the ground floor flat including home working space. However, this would principally be a private benefit. Whilst the proposal incorporates principles of sustainable design and energy efficient materials, since the proposal relates to a single dwelling, these benefits would be modest and would not outweigh the harm I have identified above. Likewise, whilst the proposal would not appear to adversely affect heritage assets or the living conditions of occupiers of nearby properties, the absence of harm in these matters does not justify harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

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

E Dade

INSPECTOR