



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 13th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/22/3303122

4 Swiftsden Way, Bromley BR1 4NT

- 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 Mrs Laura Ivancia against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/125702, dated 25 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing garage and erection of a new garage together with a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to this 2-storey semi-detached house which is located within a residential area of similar terraced and semi-detached houses. The houses are generally of modest proportions and the area contains a number of open green spaces which many of the houses look out over.
4. The appeal property sits adjacent to the junction of Swiftsden Way and Chingley Close. The first house on Chingley Close is set at 90 degrees to the appeal property, with some space between the buildings. The plot of the appeal property is roughly triangular, being wide at the front and narrow at the rear.
5. The Council has indicated that the area is identified as the 'suburban terrace' typology, within the Lewisham Character Study (2011). The study states that this typology is formed of carefully planned layouts. Properties within the area have significant spaces in the form of well sized front and rear gardens and open green corner plots built around communal greens. The open spaces in these areas provided through the gardens and spaces between the terraces and semi-detached pairs are important in contributing to the character and appearance of the area.

6. Policy DM 31 of the Development Management Local Plan (DMLP) states that extensions to existing dwellings are required to be of a high quality, site specific, and sensitive design quality, and to respect and/or complement the setting. The Council has also adopted its Supplementary Planning Document Alterations and Extensions (SPD), which gives guidance on various forms of domestic alterations and, in reference to 2 storey extensions, states that the space between buildings can be an important characteristic of the street scene and that side spaces allow for views between buildings and help to prevent an overbearing enclosure of the street frontage. It also indicates that the width of side extensions should normally be no more than half the width of the frontage of the original house.
7. The proposed extension would replace the existing detached garage and add an extension to the house. The proposal would have elements of the front elevation that would be set back and the proposed roof would step down, when seen against the existing house. The overall width of the extensions would be more than the width of the existing house. Whilst I appreciate that some effort has been made to reduce the effects of the proposed extension by setting some parts of it back, and stepping the roof down, its overall width is such that it would appear dominating and would fail to appear subordinate to the original house. I acknowledge that the SPD is guidance and not policy, however in my judgement it offers relevant and appropriate guidance which is applicable to the appeal scheme. In this respect, it is supportive of Policy DM31 and, taking account of the requirements of that policy, I consider that the proposal raises conflict with it.
8. In addition to the unacceptable effect that I have set out above, I agree with the Council that the arrangement of houses at corners such as this provides an area of important space between the buildings which contribute positively to the area. In my view, the proposal would unacceptably erode the spaciousness here, to the detriment of the street-scene.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to the extension constructed at No 1 Swiftsden Way, opposite the appeal property. A 2-storey extension has been added and I observed this at my visit. I note that it is significantly narrower than the proposal which is before me and has far less impact on the area than I judge the appeal scheme would have. In these circumstances, its presence does not alter my view of the appeal scheme.
10. The appellant also refers to 'an active planning application' for redevelopment nearby. However, I have no information submitted about the progress of that proposal and so this has little effect on my consideration of the appeal. I have taken account of all other matters but find that nothing is sufficient to outweigh the unacceptable effects of the proposal and policy conflict that I have identified. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR