



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 April 2023

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/23/3316464

22 Blackheath Rise, London SE13 7PN

- 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 Miss M Buckingham against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/129553, dated 6 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey side extension
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Blackheath Conservation Area (BCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey, detached house featuring a double-gable frontage. It is situated in a tree-lined residential street primarily comprising imposing Victorian villas but also including some 20th century housing. In this context the appeal property is unique and distinctive. Its design, scale and materials suggest it pre-dates the surrounding houses and it has a notably wider frontage than its neighbours. As well as being a handsome house in its own right, the appeal property makes a clear positive contribution to the character and appearance of the BCA. This, together with the property's uniqueness, are matters to which I attach significant weight.
4. Unlike other properties in the street, the appeal property has a relatively wide gap to one side. The information before me indicates that this gap was occupied by a modern garage which has recently been removed. The proposal would comprise the erection of a 2-storey extension within this side gap.
5. This side extension would mirror the fenestration in the host property and would have a partly flat and partly pitched roof making it slightly lower than the host property. In addition, its front elevation would be set slightly behind the main part of the neighbouring front elevation. Despite the setting back of the frontage and the subordinate roof form, the addition would be highly conspicuous in the views along the street and would disrupt the essentially

symmetrical arrangement of the host property. In addition, whilst wide gaps between properties are not a common feature in Blackheath Rise, the infilling of the gap to the side of the appeal property would result in a more abrupt and jarring transition between the appeal property and its more substantial neighbour.

6. Due to its siting and size, I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host property and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the BCA. Consequently, the proposal fails to accord with Policies 15 and 16 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011) and Policies 30, 31 and 36 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Development Management Local Plan (2014) which, amongst other matters, seek to ensure the significance of heritage assets is conserved and conservation areas are protected from inappropriate development. They also require extensions to existing buildings to be of a high, site specific and sensitive design quality. There is also conflict with the aims of the Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2019).
7. Whilst the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the BCA, the harm to this heritage asset would be less than substantial. In these circumstances Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires me to weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. As the proposal would solely provide additional private living accommodation there are no public benefits associated with it.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole

INSPECTOR