



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2023

by K Allen MEng (Hons) MArch PGCert ARB

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/22/3312293

First Floor Flat, 33 Burghill Road, Lewisham, London SE26 4HJ

- 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 Sophieclaire Armitage against the decision of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/127022, dated 19 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is the addition of a dormer to the rear of the property.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

3. The area is residential and comprises a mix of low-rise properties, including semi-detached and terraced houses and purpose-built flats. There is some variety in the style and design of roofs in the area, however the majority of roofs appear unaltered with only a small number of rear dormers visible. The host property is semi-detached and further subdivided into flats.
4. The dormer would sit entirely within the roof slope and would utilise matching materials and complementary windows. Despite the nominal offset of the dormer from the sides, eaves, and ridge, it would fill the majority of the rear slope. Although the roof of the rear outrigger would partially disguise the bulk of the dormer, when viewed as a whole, the dormer would appear disproportionate in scale. It would dominate and largely square off the existing roof, appearing as an additional storey.
5. The dormer would not be visible within the street scene. However, despite the intervening distances and planting it would be a prominent feature when viewed from surrounding properties and gardens and would be a bulky addition to the roofscape. While there are other dormers in the area, some of which are comparable in size, due to the intervening structures, these larger dormers do not form the immediate context of the proposal. In any event, they do not respect the original roof forms and do not contribute positively to the area and their presence is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable developments.

6. Therefore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area, in conflict with Policy CS15 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (June 2011) and Policies DM30 and DM31 of the Lewisham Local Development Framework Development Management Local Plan (November 2014) which collectively seek to ensure that development is of the highest quality design, is sensitive to local context and responds to local character, taking into account scale and mass.
7. The proposal would also conflict with the Lewisham Local Plan Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (April 2019) where it advises that rear dormers should be of the highest quality design whilst considering the original roof form.

Other Matters

8. The proposal would make an effective use of land, providing additional accommodation with the flexibility to meet the needs of the existing occupiers and future occupiers. However, due to the scale of the proposal, the social and economic benefits of the scheme, including, local jobs and increased council tax contributions, would be limited. I acknowledge that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of surrounding neighbours or have a negative impact on trees or ecology, however these are neutral factors which neither weigh in favour of, or against the proposal and would be expected of any well-designed scheme. Overall, these matters do not outweigh the harm identified above.
9. My attention has been drawn to details of several other dormer extensions in the wider area. However, I note that elements of their design, including the size, form, materials, and window detailing are different. Further, the design and subdivision of the host buildings and their surrounding context appear to be significantly different. Moreover, the existence of other dormers in the area does not justify the harm identified to the character and appearance of the host property and the area above.
10. I note the appellant's assertion that the appeal property appears as a house from the street and that proposal would be considered acceptable under permitted development. Regardless of the property's appearance, as a flat, the property does not benefit from permitted development rights and the proposal must be assessed against the relevant development plan policies. Further, compliance with permitted development guidance does not guarantee compliance with local development plan policies.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

K Allen

INSPECTOR