



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2023

by J Wellstead BA(Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/22/3309943

296A Leahurst Road, Lewisham, London SE13 5LT

- 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 Frances Sleight against the decision of London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref DC/22/127177, dated 14 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is a proposed loft conversion with L-Shaped rear dormer and 2No. front roof windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a two-bedroom first floor flat within a two-storey, mid-terrace building in a residential area. There is a school near the appeal site, however the other residential properties adjoining the appeal site are predominantly of a similar style and appearance, with the original front and rear roof forms retained. This creates a strong and distinctive architectural pattern which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
4. The appeal scheme is for a large rear, L-shaped dormer with flat roof to provide an additional bedroom and bathroom, as well as two roof lights on the front roof slope.
5. The Lewisham Local Plan Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2019 (SPD) advises that the architectural integrity of a building must not be harmed by any roof extension or alteration. It also states that it is important to provide a roof form which is appropriate to the building and adjoining properties. This means that the changes must take into consideration the architectural language and proportions of the existing dwelling and its neighbours.
6. The proposed rear extension would be set below the existing ridge height and set back from the eaves and rear elevation. However, it is of considerable size and scale. It would dominate the rear roof slope of the existing dwelling and would not appear subordinate to it. The proposed extension would fail to

respect the original scale and mass of the dwelling due to its excessive width and depth. I therefore find that the proposed extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its adjoining neighbours and would conflict with the design guidance set out in the SPD.

7. The rear extension would not be readily visible from any public vantage points although views of it would be obtainable from neighbouring dwellings. An extension of the size and scale proposed would stand out as a dominant feature within its immediate surroundings and as such would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding garden environment.
8. Although other examples of similar developments have been granted planning permission through Permitted Development Rights, the proposed development requires planning permission and accordingly, I have considered the proposal against the development plan. In addition, while there are rear extensions and other alterations on the terrace opposite the appeal site and further along the street, there are none in the immediate vicinity on the same side as the appeal site. The introduction of such a scheme in this context, for the reasons I have set out would harmfully alter the character of the terrace row within which it would sit.
9. The appellant has highlighted that permission has recently been granted for a similar loft conversion. However, I do not have the full details of that scheme in front of me so cannot be sure that it is comparable. Further, the use of grey slate tiles and the preservation of some of the other features of the host dwelling does not alter my conclusion on this issue.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. Consequently, the scheme would be contrary to Policy 15 High Quality Design for Lewisham of the Core Strategy (June 2011)¹, DM Policy 30 Urban Design and Local Character and DM Policy 31 Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings including Residential Extensions of the Development Management Local Plan (November 2014)². These policies seek to ensure - among other matters - that roof extensions are of high-quality design which complements and is sensitive to the form and characteristics of the original building. It would also conflict with the aims of the SPD.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has highlighted that there are personal circumstances which mean that the occupiers would benefit from the improved and enlarged family accommodation the appeal scheme would provide. However, there is nothing to indicate that this could not be achieved through an alternative design. I therefore afford this matter limited weight.
12. The appellant states that the appeal site is a purpose-built maisonette, rather than a converted house as stated by the council. However, this does not alter my conclusion on the main issues.

¹ Lewisham local development framework, Core Strategy, Development plan document, Adopted June 2011

² Lewisham local development framework, Development Management Local Plan, Adopted 26 November 2014

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

J Wellstead

INSPECTOR