



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2024

by N Perrins BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/24/3337281

15 Roxley Road, Hither Green, Lewisham SE13 6HG

- 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 M Borooh against the decision of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref: DC/23/133048, dated 12 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is ground and first floor extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023 but there are no material changes relevant to the main issue for this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey mid-terrace dwelling. To the rear of the property is an existing two-storey outrigger, which is part of a conjoined pair with the neighbouring property No 13. The other dwellings along the northern side of Roxley Road also have two-storey rear outriggers laid out in symmetrical pairs. The terrace that the appeal site is situated in is within a perimeter block of buildings that fronts onto Lewisham High Street to the west and Mount Pleasant Road to the north. The rear of these properties, as well as those on the northern side of the road where the appeal site is situated, are visible to the other buildings within the block.
5. The outrigger pairs along the terrace are characterised by their general uniformity in terms of depth and symmetry with each other. At first floor level the proposal would extend the existing outrigger by around 1.8m, which would disrupt the symmetry that exists with the existing pair with No 13. Furthermore, it is evident from the plans before me that the first floor addition would also extend further than the adjacent outrigger at No 17, which has a

greater depth than the pair at the appeal site and No 13. The appeal proposal would, therefore, result in the outriggers to Nos 17, 15 and 13 all having different depths, which would be discordant and out of keeping with the existing character of the rear of properties along this section of Roxley Road where the depths of consecutive outriggers do not have the variation that would occur in this case.

6. With regard to the cumulative effect of the proposal, there is no dispute between the parties over the ground floor extension. I agree that the ground floor element is appropriate in terms of its scale, depth, bulk and mass and would not appear as incongruous in the context of the appearance of the rear of the property or immediate area in isolation. However, the first floor element due to its excessive depth when considered together with the ground floor would result in an overdevelopment that would visually dominate and not be subservient to the appeal property. This would be out of character for the terrace where extensions to properties mainly comprise ground floor extensions, which appear as secondary additions.
7. I note the appellant has highlighted that neither the Council's development plan policy or supporting guidance prohibits asymmetry or cumulative extensions to a property, which I agree is the case. However, the development plan policies require development to accord with and respond to local context and the character of the area, which for the aforementioned reasons would not be achieved in this case.
8. I also acknowledge that the impact of the proposal would be contained to views within the perimeter block and from the rear of other properties. Whilst there is variation to the rear of properties within the block, the overall effect of the proposal due to the depth of the first floor addition would be an overdevelopment of the property that would appear as an unduly prominent and incongruous addition in its particular context and views to it.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to an approved development at 30 Embleton Road¹ where a similar asymmetrical outrigger was approved by the Council. The full details as to why the Council approved such a development elsewhere are not before me but the information before me does appear to demonstrate that the Council would accept asymmetrical development to an outrigger where designed and scaled appropriately to be acceptable. The appellant has also highlighted that variation to the backs of properties exists near to the site along George Lane. However, without any specific details provided, I am not persuaded that the character of this other nearby road is directly comparable to the specific local character context that is determinative in this appeal.
10. Notwithstanding examples of similar development elsewhere, I have assessed this appeal on its own merits. In this case, the first floor extension would be visually incongruous with the host property and its neighbours, appearing as out of keeping with the prevailing established character that exists to the rear of properties along Roxley Road.
11. I have also carefully considered the appellant's contention that a rear dormer could be constructed under permitted development in accordance with the GPDO that would also disrupt symmetry along the terrace. Whilst that may be

¹ DC/20/117375

the case, a dormer in the roof is a different form of development to that proposed and not directly comparable to the impacts that would arise by the first floor extension. I, therefore, give this only limited weight in my decision.

12. For the reasons set out, the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the main dwelling and surrounding area. Therefore, the appeal proposal is contrary to Policy 15 (*High quality design for Lewisham*) of the Lewisham Core Strategy (2011) and Policies 30 (*Urban design and local character*) and 31 (*Alterations and extensions to existing buildings including residential extensions*) of the Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014), which require development to be sensitive to the local context and respond to local character, create a positive relationship to the existing townscape and be of a high, site specific, and sensitive design quality that respects the form of original buildings.
13. The proposal would also not be consistent with the guidance within the Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2019), which requires two-storey rear extensions to maintain the integrity of the host property. Finally, the proposal would not be consistent with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the National Design Guide, which seek to ensure that developments have a high standard of design appropriate to their site and surrounds.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the proposal is not consistent with the policies of the development plan as a whole, due to its impact on the appearance of the appeal property and the character of the surrounding area, and there are no material considerations that would lead me to a different conclusion. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR