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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 September 2024

**by H Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 1 October 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/24/3338471**

**102 Edgeley Road, Lambeth, London SW4 6HB**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Catherine Worth against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
  - The application Ref is 23/03750/FUL.
  - The development the is enlargement of the existing rear dormer into a full width rear mansard roof extension with two dormer windows and the insertion of a Juliet balcony door.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matters

2. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered from that on the planning application form. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the description given on the original application.
3. The host property, No 102 Edgeley Road (No 102), is an upper storey flat within a row of terraced properties. During my site visit I was able to enter the host property as well as view it from some neighbouring land. I noted that a rear roof extension was already in place, and this included two dormer windows and a set of french doors. I further note that the Council determined the planning application on a retrospective basis.
4. However, owing to a combination of the roof extension's height above ground, the short depth of garden plots at the back of the terrace and the screening of the host property which exists in the area as a result of landscaping and other buildings, I am unable to confirm whether each aspect of the roof extension implemented matches that shown on the plans. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the development shown on the plans submitted.

## Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the host property.

## Reasons

6. No 102 forms a part of a terrace of properties which exhibit some similar and distinctive design features. This includes, to their front elevations, lightly-coloured painted render finishes, bay and oriel windows, and arched porches. Elsewhere on Edgeley Road, and on neighbouring streets, there are other traditional terraced properties which share features of a like design, some of those features being ornately detailed. Consequently, and even though many properties in the area have been the subject of alterations and extensions, the traditional detailing and the strength of uniformity on display by properties contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Amongst other matters, policies Q5, Q8 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 (LP) seek to ensure that development positively responds to the original architecture of the host building and the positive aspects of local character. They also require construction detailing to be visually attractive and, in specific regard to extensions, that such developments are subordinate and exhibit a design, building materials and detailing appropriate to the host building.
8. The Lambeth Design Guide Part 4 Building Alterations, Extensions and Retrofit Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides design guidance in relation to building extensions, and this includes dormers and roof mansards. Whilst acknowledging that such additions are an appropriate means to increase and optimise accommodation, the SPD sets out some quite prescriptive guidance to ensure they are appropriately designed. This includes that dormers should be subordinate, be of an appropriate size and alignment, and should incorporate window types and styles in keeping with, or which would improve, the host building.
9. Policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also seek to ensure that development is visually attractive and would be sympathetic to local character, whilst it advises that development that is not well designed should be refused. The Framework also sets out that the external appearance of mansard roof extensions should be in harmony with the original building.
10. The french doors' frame and glazing commence only slightly above the lowest part of the mansard roof and come close to the top of the mansard roof. Therefore, although they are quite slender, the french doors are a tall and thereby imposing roofscape feature. Altogether with the dormers beside them, the amount of fenestration on the mansard roof is considerable. As such, the french doors and the dormers are the visually dominant elements of the rear roofscape and not the slopes of the mansard roof. I find this proportion of fenestration to be excessive, and it harmfully unbalances the appearance of the rear roofscape.
11. The disparity in the size and shape of the french doors in comparison with the dormers beside also creates a discordant complexity to the rear roofscape. That the french doors are misaligned with other window and door openings on the rear elevation beneath adds further to this discordance at the back of the property.
12. In coming to these views, I acknowledge that the rear ground and first floor elevations have some asymmetrical window and door arrangements. However,

the appeal scheme exacerbates this to the detriment of the appearance of the elevation as a whole. Furthermore, the use of appropriate external materials does not sufficiently mitigate, nor address, the design deficiencies I have identified.

13. To the back of the appeal site there is a trainline and beyond that, trees. I accept, therefore, that the rear elevation of the appeal property is not readily visible from roads and footpaths – typical public vantage points from which development is often experienced. Nevertheless, there are likely views of the development from passing trains. Moreover, and even though the development is by and large well-concealed, it nevertheless represents an unsympathetic addition to the appeal property, unbefitting to its character and appearance and the general quality of the traditional architecture which prevails in the area.
14. For the reasons given above, I find that the development fails to positively respond to the architecture of the appeal building, incorporates windows and doors of a type and style which are collectively out of keeping with the property and, overall, amounts to poor design. Consequently, the effects of the development upon the character and appearance of the host property are unacceptable. Therefore, the development is contrary to policies Q5, Q8 and Q11 of the LP, the guidance of the SPD and the policies within the Framework I have referred to above.

### **Other Matters**

15. In April 2023 the Council granted planning permission for a rear mansard roof extension with two dormer windows<sup>1</sup>. I have no reason to conclude that there is not a greater than theoretical possibility that the host property could be altered so that the approved rear mansard roof extension with two dormers could be provided instead of the implemented development the subject of this appeal. The April 2023 permission represents a genuine fallback position.
16. However, importantly, the fallback scheme does not include the french doors. In my main issue I have set out that the french doors, and the cumulative roofscape effects of them together with the two dormers, are harmful to the character and appearance of the host property. The general scale and shape of the approved mansard roof extension is akin to that in the appeal scheme. However, the absence of the french doors means that the visual dominance of the fenestration and the discordant complexity of the rear roofscape that results in the appeal scheme, would not arise in the fallback development. Consequently, that an alternative rear mansard roof extension could be implemented, but which would not result in the harmful effects of the appeal scheme, does not weigh in the appellant's favour.
17. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of roofscape features and developments in the area. However, the full details of each case have not been submitted and, as a result, it is not possible to draw accurate comparisons between those schemes and that the subject of this appeal. The cited examples are therefore of limited weight in my determination.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning application reference 23/00466/FUL

## **Conclusion**

18. The development conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate a decision other than one in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*H Jones*

INSPECTOR