



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2025

by **C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/24/3349683

158 Langton Way, Blackheath, London, SE3 7JS

- 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 Mr Oliver Jackson against the decision of the Council of The Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 24/1206/HD.
 - The development proposed is described as 'enlarged side extension, attic conversion including rear dormer and 2 no. conservation rooflights, changes to ground floor fenestration at rear'.
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Preliminary matters

1. I consider the Council's description of the proposed development as contained on their Decision Notice to be more accurate than that on the application form and so have determined this appeal on that basis, namely 'conversion of the existing garage to a habitable space and construction of a two storey side/front infill extension; construction of a rear dormer roof extension; installation of two roof lights to the original front roof slope; alterations to the front and rear fenestration'.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of the existing garage to a habitable space and construction of a two storey side/front infill extension; construction of a rear dormer roof extension; installation of two roof lights to the original front roof slope; alterations to the front and rear fenestration at 158 Langton Way, Blackheath, London, SE3 7JS in accordance with the terms of the application ref 24/1206/HD, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on the approved plans and the Design & Access Statement.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 24-03-DE-001 (Rev. A), 24-03-DE-002 (Rev. A), 24-03-DE-003 (Rev. A), 24-03-DE-004 (Rev. A), 24-03-DP-001 (Rev. A), 24-03-DP-002 (Rev. A), 24-03-DP-00G (Rev. A), 24-03-DP-00R (Rev. A), 24-03-DS-001 (Rev. A) and Design & Access Statement (Aava Architects).

Reasons

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Blackheath Conservation Area. I have a duty under s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Area.
4. The Blackheath Conservation Area covers a large area which is predominately residential, and is characterised in the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal 2013 (CAA) as being an area of leafy streets that reflect London's suburban growth in the 19th Century. Langton Way is within an area of informal appearance that has origins as a back lane serving the grander houses of Shooters Hill Road, with the CAA describing the diverse array of architectural styles, periods and site layouts. The significance of the Conservation Area as a heritage asset derives from its evolution as a residential area, the quality in the design and layout of housing, and a contrast in the scale and form of housing across the Area that reflects this evolution over time.
5. I saw at my site visit there is a diverse character to Langton Way, with houses of varying scale, form and design fronting Langton Way, along with houses set back from the road. This includes houses of contemporary appearance that are evidently recent developments.
6. The appeal property is a modern two storey house with pitched roof, and has a two storey element that is set back from the front elevation and has a lower ridgeline. To the east is a house of notably different design that sits considerably further forward in its plot and is flat roofed. This creates a side elevation that is very visible in views along the road and, with the set-back of the appeal property, appears somewhat imbalanced in its relationship with the appeal property.
7. The proposals would see the set-back addition to the appeal property brought forward close to the line of the main elevation, with only a small set-back retained, and alterations to the fenestration. The lower ridgeline would be retained. This would change the proportions of the house to some degree, but the extended and altered house would remain well-balanced and of good design. In the context of the wider area, and in particular the relationship with the next door house, this remodelled house would appear very much in character with the locality and would not be imposing. The extended house would sit next to the large building mass of the neighbour, and there would be very little impression of the change in both near views and the wider area.
8. The proposals show a dormer window across the rear of the property which would serve a bedroom. The dormer would be set in from the side of the property, and away from the ridgeline and eaves, and be of contemporary design. This alteration to the roof would have little visibility from the street, and would be appropriate to the area, where I saw a variety of roof forms, and where there are considerably taller properties to the rear that front Shooters Hill Road. The overall scale of the extended property and the roof would be acceptable for the area, and when seen from adjoining properties.
9. The properties in the area, including those to the rear, experience a degree of mutual overlooking at present, though over some distance. The dormer would

serve a bedroom and would not materially change the level of privacy for existing residents.

10. The design, form and siting of the proposed extensions and alterations to the property are thus appropriate to the host property and to the surrounding area. This means there would be no effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and thus the significance of the heritage asset would not be harmed.
11. On the main issue it is concluded the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved. The proposals therefore satisfy the requirements of the development plan that seek to ensure residential extensions are of a scale and design appropriate to the area, and that heritage assets are preserved or enhanced, as set out in Policies D3, D4 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, and Policies DH1, DH3 and DH(a) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014).
12. I acknowledge that certain aspects of the proposed extension do not meet some of the detailed specifications set out in the Council's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD), which is a material consideration in this appeal. However, I am satisfied that when viewed overall and in the context of neighbouring properties and the wider area, the extensions and alterations to the appeal property clearly represent a high quality design that reflect the host property and its particular context in relation to the adjoining buildings. The overall objective of the SPD is to seek high quality design and development that is contextual; the National Planning Policy Framework similarly seeks good design. The proposals would achieve this and comply with the development plan, and not conflict with the intent of the SPD. The appeal is therefore allowed.
13. The Council suggested a number of conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. A condition requiring matching materials would not be appropriate since the rear dormer is shown in differing materials to the main house, so I have modified that condition to refer to the specifications as set out on the drawings and in the Design & Access Statement, to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development. A condition specifying the approved plans is necessary in the interests of precision.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR