
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 May 2025

by **B Pattison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/D/24/3354789

96 Newquay Road, Catford, Lewisham, London SE6 2NP

- 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 Luke Barrow against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/136437.
 - The development proposed is Removal of existing rear dormer to replace with larger rear dormer, two new front facing rooflights and all associated works at 96 Newquay Road SE6.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal is in a conservation area (CA), I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, as set out in section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area, with due regard to the location of the site in the Culverly Green Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal building is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located within a residential area which comprises groups of other semi-detached properties set-back from and facing the road. The front elevation has a prominent gable and displays features characteristic of its period such as two storey bay windows and horizontal architectural banding between ground and first floor levels.
5. The character of this part of the Culverly Green CA and its significance stems from, amongst other aspects, the arrangement of often large Edwardian houses within a clear street plan, where the houses front the road in a regular pattern and are interspersed with mature street trees. The Council's Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2001) (CACA), also identifies the style of houses on Newquay Road which allude to the contemporary Old English fashion and notes that common materials include brick and pebble-dash to the walls, and plain tile roofs, which are of particular importance in this part of the CA and as a whole. With its architectural detailing and use of red brickwork and plain clay roof tiles, the appeal building positively contributes to the character of the area.

6. The proposal would result in the replacement of all roof tiles on the existing roof with artificial dark grey slate tiles. This would introduce a new material finish, which is not common amongst properties on Newquay Road, to the appeal building. As a result of the material and finish, the new tiles would be discerned as a discordant addition that would appear incongruous alongside the clay roof tiles within the street scene.
7. My attention has been drawn to a previous approval¹ at 92 Newquay Road (No. 92) which identified artificial slate tiles within the submitted drawings. I observed during my site visit that the roof tiles at No.92 appear at odds to the majority of roofs within this stretch of Newquay Road. This increases the prominence of the roof, resulting in a discordant appearance, and I do not consider that this is a form of development which should be replicated within the CA.
8. In this regard, the CACA states that all parts of the CA have been affected by damaging incremental changes to houses. I have seen nothing of substance to suggest the guidance in the CACA is misplaced or dated and it supports what I observed. As such, the guidance in the CACA is a matter of significant weight in my considerations.
9. I have had regard to the structural information² provided by the appellants. However, whilst artificial slates may be a lighter-weight solution, I have no substantive evidence to indicate that, for instance, clay roof-tiles would not be structurally feasible.
10. Whilst there may be a slate roof on the existing appeal property's rear lean-to, it is not visible within any views from the public domain, and clearly contrasts with the existing tiles on the house's principal roof. It therefore does not establish that these materials should be replicated throughout the property.
11. The appellant advises that the CA Appraisal for another CA within the borough identifies that artificial slate may be used within that CA. However, it seems to me that the built context may be different to Culverly Green CA. Nevertheless, the CACA for Culverly Green does not advise that artificial slates are an appropriate material, and I am required to reach conclusions based on the individual circumstances of this appeal.
12. The Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (SPD) does not preclude rear dormer windows but outlines that they should not be wider than two thirds of the original, unextended roof and should be centrally placed or align with the windows below the roof. Whilst it would be wider than two thirds of the roof, the dormer's hipped roof would respect the host dwelling's roof form. The dormer would also have a comfortable set-back from the eaves, ridge and the party wall with No. 94, and, relative to the size of the dwelling, the dormer would not appear disproportionately large. Due to its height and position to the rear of the property, it would not appear prominent within the Newquay Road streetscene.
13. The dwelling's rear elevation is not symmetrical. However, the positioning of the dormer's windows, combined with their height and width would not follow the pattern of fenestration or hierarchy of fenestration within the rear elevation.

¹ Council ref: DC/19/112263

² Appendix 2 of the appellant's Statement of Case

Consequently, the dormer's large fenestration would have a dominating effect on the host dwelling, and would not comply with the requirements for rear dormers within conservation areas, as set out within the SPD.

14. My attention has been drawn to examples of other dormer windows approved³ within the CA. From the submitted evidence, none of these examples involve windows of a scale and design similar to the proposal before me. Notwithstanding this, each development must be considered on its individual merits, and I have reached my conclusion based on the individual merit of the appeal proposal.
15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development, due to the size and design of the dormer's windows, and use of artificial tiles, would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole. I therefore find that it conflicts with Policies 15 and 16 of the Core Strategy (2011), Policies 30, 31, 36 of the Development Management Local Plan (2014) and Policies D1, D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021). Amongst other things and with regard to extensions in particular, these policies seek to ensure that the historic environment is safeguarded from harm, the value and significance of conservation areas are maintained and new development is of a high standard of design and respects local character.
16. In failing to preserve the character and appearance of the CA, I find that the proposed development would, in the words of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. In such circumstances, the Framework requires that the less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits. Although the proposed development would provide improved and enlarged living and home working space, this would, given the nature of the appeal proposal, equate to a private rather than a public benefit.
17. The appellant also indicates that the artificial roof tiles would ensure both safety and durability, aligning with the broader goals of maintaining the property's long-term stability. It is also suggested that the enlarged living space would support the retention of families in the local area. Be that as it may, based on the scale and nature of the development, the public benefits relating to this would be modest. They do not therefore outweigh the harm I have identified to the CA and the great weight given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The proposed development therefore conflicts with the provisions of the Framework in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
18. As set out above, the size of the dormer windows and use of an uncharacteristic roof tile would also conflict with the aims of the SPD.

Other Matters

19. The development would provide extra accommodation, and would thus improve the living conditions of the occupiers, providing additional space for living and home working. In addition, the Council has indicated that the principle of the development is acceptable. Be that as it may, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

³ 56 Bargery Road (DC/21/121423); 108 Arran Road (DC/17/101601); 92 Newquay Road (DC/19/112263); 42 Penerley Road, London, SE6 2LQ (DC/19/112593) and 139 Culverly Road, London, SE6 2JZ (DC/22/129271).

Conclusion

20. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the Culverly Green CA. For the above reasons, having had regard to the development plan as a whole, along with all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Pattison

INSPECTOR