



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2026

by **S Burch BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/C5690/W/25/3376025

152-154 Lewisham Way, Lewisham, London, SE14 6PD

- 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. T. Uthayakanathan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham.
 - The application Ref is DC/25/139526.
 - The development proposed is described as 'extension of 3 first upper units with new roof top enclosures to create an extra bedroom and bathroom for each.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the interests of precision, I have taken the address used in the heading above from the appeal form, which references the whole property. The address provided in the application form references Flat A at the property.
3. Planning decisions must be based on the development plan policies prevailing at the time of determination. The Council has recently adopted the Lewisham Local Plan (LLP). As a result, the LLP now forms part of the development plan. It has replaced the Lewisham Core Strategy and Lewisham Development Management Local Plan, which are cited in the reason for refusal. The main parties have had the opportunity to comment on the relevant policies of the LLP during the appeal process.
4. My site visit was scheduled as an access required site visit, although I was not able to proceed on that basis. However, I was able to consider the main issue based on seeing the site and its surrounding context from public areas and hence my visit was carried out unaccompanied.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including the Brockley Conservation Area (CA), and the setting of nearby listed buildings and non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have

special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Additionally, Section 72 of the LBCA requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

7. The appeal site relates to a property on Lewisham Way, between the junctions with Rokeby Road and Upper Brockley Road. It forms part of a small parade of buildings within the Lewisham Way Neighbourhood Local Centre. The parade is made up of three storey terraced properties, generally with commercial units at ground floor and residential accommodation on the upper floor. Some of the commercial units are vacant. The parade benefits from a consistent ground floor building line, flat roof profile between 146- 154 Lewisham Way and regular window arrangement. Overall, the parade is relatively uniform in its architectural form and scale.

Significance and settings

8. The site is situated within the Brockley CA. The CA Appraisal outlines how the character of the area is that of a large Victorian suburb. There are four wide, tree line roads running from north to south through the CA and smaller streets with slightly more modest housing bisect these roads. The appeal site or parade of properties is not specifically mentioned in the appraisal; however it is situated in the Upper Brockley and Rokeby Road area of the CA, which is one of the oldest parts of the CA. In my view, the significance of the CA is largely derived from the variety of architectural styles and the wide, tree lined roads with large front and rear gardens, adding to the area's spacious character. The appeal property is of limited architectural interest, however due to its uniform massing and alignment, it makes a neutral contribution to the significance of the CA.
9. The site is proximate to two listed buildings. It is situated between the Grade II listed former Deptford Library (Lewisham Art House) and the Grade II listed War Memorial.
10. The listing entry for the former Deptford Library building describes its modified baroque style and front centre with four pairs of tall Ionic columns and four rounded arch windows. The significance of this building is largely derived from its architectural style and interest. The listing entry for the Deptford War Memorial describes its positioning at the north end of the memorial gardens, which run alongside Lewisham Way. It is of Portland stone and takes the form of a tapering octagonal column. There is a carved figure of a soldier and a sailor and the hands of the figures rest on the stocks of their up turned guns. The significance of the memorial is largely derived from its historical interest, as a testament to the sacrifice made in both World Wars and subsequent conflicts. The appeal property makes a neutral contribution to the setting of the listed buildings, as a result of its regular and uniform scale, massing and alignment.
11. An early twentieth century art deco style building is also located opposite the site. Whilst not formally designated, the Council consider it to be of sufficient architectural merit to be considered a NDHA. The building is three storeys in height with a flat roof. On the upper floors the windows are laid out in a consistent pattern, with tall columns on either side. To my mind, the significance of this property, as a NDHA, is principally derived from its distinctive art deco style. Again,

due to its regular and uniform scale and massing, the appeal property makes a neutral contribution to its setting.

Effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance, including the CA and the setting of the listed buildings and NDHA

12. The proposed development would result in the creation of an additional storey on the appeal property. The additional storey would disrupt and unbalance the uniform roof profile that is evident along the parade. Although the additional storey would be set back from the front and rear elevations, it would span the entire width of the appeal property. This, coupled with the generous floor to ceiling height and raised parapet would result in the extension appearing overly bulky and top heavy. It would appear overtly prominent and incongruous when viewed from within the street scene. In this regard, it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, including the CA.
13. The disruption to the visual relationship along the terrace would also erode the setting of the nearby heritage assets. The prominence of the extension would distract from views of the heritage assets, thereby harming their significance. I do not agree that the proposed development would not be visible from most viewpoints. It would project above the existing roofline and be readily visible in both shorter and longer views of the appeal site, and the neighbouring listed buildings and NDHA.
14. Although 156- 158 (No. 156-158) Lewisham Way has a sloping roof, the eaves height is broadly in line with that of the appeal property and other properties along the parade. Additionally, the nature of the sloping roof softens the visual impact of the increased height, bulk and massing. As illustrated on the submitted proposed front elevation, the proposed ridge line would sit above the ridge line of No. 156-158, and the flat roof style would appear bulky and top heavy. The appellant contends that these properties are NDHA's and have had significant roof top additions. Based on the evidence before me, the Council however do not appear to suggest that these properties are NDHA's. I also do not know the circumstances under which any roof additions on these properties were constructed or their status with regard to planning permission. I have therefore afforded little weight to this point.
15. I appreciate that the scheme is of a reduced scale in comparison to previously refused schemes. Various key features of the CA, such as numerous pairs of dwellings along Upper Brockey Road, may not be directly impacted by the scheme. Nonetheless, this does not outweigh the harm identified. Additionally, as set out above, the scheme would harm the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.
16. White render is commonly used within the surrounding area. Additionally, the window arrangement reflects that of the first and second floors and samples of materials could be conditioned if the appeal were to be allowed. I therefore have no objection to the above elements of the scheme, when considered in isolation. Nonetheless, as set out above, the overall scale and massing of the additional storey would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, including the CA and the setting of the listed buildings and NDHA.
17. For the above reasons, I therefore find that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would fail to preserve the character and

appearance of the CA and would detract from the setting of the nearby listed buildings and NDHA.

Public benefits

18. Given the scale and nature of the proposal, the degree of harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets would be less than substantial. On a scale, it would be at the lower end of less than substantial harm. The harm to the NDHA would also be on the lower end of the scale.
19. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 216 of the Framework also states that in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect NDHA's, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
20. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of benefits of the scheme. The scheme would result in the creation of an additional bedroom and bathroom for the existing residential units. This may have some minor benefits for existing and future occupiers. They also contend that the scheme would refurbish the property and enhance the appearance of the building, which they state is poorly designed and maintained. However, the submitted plans indicate that there would be no significant changes to the elevations below the parapet. Even if the scheme did result in some general refurbishment and repair works, there is nothing before me to demonstrate why such works would be dependent on planning permission for an additional storey being granted.
21. There may be some minor economic benefits throughout the construction of the scheme and its lifetime. It may make an effective use of land in an accessible location. The appellant also contends that where possible, the properties would comply with the Lifetime Homes requirements and would include various sustainability measures. However, given the small scale of development, I afford these benefits limited weight.
22. The scheme would not result in the creation of any additional dwellings. I therefore do not agree that it would increase the supply of housing. Whilst the scheme may make the properties more financially viable, this is generally considered a private benefit.
23. Paragraph 202 of the Framework states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource. The public benefits of the proposal carry limited weight. On the basis that paragraph 212 of the Framework establishes that great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset, I am not satisfied that the limited benefits would be sufficient to outweigh the degree of harm identified.
24. In summary, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, with it failing to preserve the character and appearance of the CA and the settings of the neighbouring listed buildings and NDHA. It would therefore be contrary to Policies HE1, HE2, HE3, QD1, QD2, QD8 and QD9 of the LLP and Policy HC1 of the London Plan. Collectively, amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure high quality design that preserves or enhances local character, including CA's, and does not harm the significance or settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Other Matters

25. The appellant undertook pre-application discussions with the Council a number of years ago. The response states that a roof extension would be supported in principle, however given the context of the site high quality design would be essential to achieve a positive outcome. The Council has set out why it does not consider the scheme to be of an acceptable design. In any case, pre-application discussions are informal and not binding on any future decision the Council may make once a proposal has been subject to the formal planning process.
26. The residential units may meet London Plan requirements and ensure an acceptable standard of living. Cycle and waste storage may be provided, and the site is not in an area of flood risk. Parking and drainage would be unaffected, and neighbouring amenity may not be harmed. These are however considered neutral factors and would not weigh in favour of, nor against, the appeal.
27. Whilst the Brockley Society have no objection to the principle of an additional storey, they have raised concerns regarding the proposed design of the scheme.

Conclusion

28. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Burch

INSPECTOR