

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2016

by Timothy C King BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 24 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/16/3157364

33 Greenways, Beckenham, BR3 3NQ

- 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 Mr Novica Jevric against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/16/02810/FULL6, dated 10 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is '*1st floor side extension, single storey rear extension & loft conversion with rear dormer.*'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council, in its decision notice, and clarified by reference to its case report, raises no objections to either the proposed rear dormer extension or the single-storey rear extension. Although I have taken into account representations from interested parties who have objected to the proposal due to their consideration, amongst other things, that the rear dormer extension would give rise to overlooking of surrounding rear gardens I must, instead, agree with the Council's approach on this issue. Rear dormer extensions are common features and a rear facing bedroom window at a heightened level, save for a greater visual range, would not impinge further on the privacies of neighbouring gardens than is already the case from first floor habitable room windows.
3. Similarly, I must disagree with objectors that the proposed single storey rear extension would affect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. The extension's northern flank wall would be set away from the common boundary with No 31, and its opposite flank's intended modest depth of some 2.8m would not unduly impact in this regard.
4. I will therefore confine my assessment to the proposed first floor side extension and roof alterations thereto.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its relationship with its semi-detached neighbour and also the
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surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The appeal dwelling is a two-storey chalet-type house which, in the streetscene, has largely kept its original symmetry with its neighbour, No 35. The proposal would involve extending the dwelling's flank wall upwards to eaves level and then projecting the hip-ended roof sideways, accordingly.
7. Policies BE1 and H8 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) both seek good design, compatible with its surroundings. In particular, Policy H8, which is concerned with residential extensions, requires that the proposed development's scale and form should respect or complement that of the host dwelling. More specifically to the proposal, residential design advice by the Council is provided in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG1) which advises that where side extensions are deemed acceptable it is good practice to set them back from the façade of the building to give the original elevation due prominence.
8. The SPG document also indicates the importance of retaining the architectural integrity of the host dwelling, with extensions thereto being required to respect the building's composition, especially the roof and the rhythm of form. Whilst I am satisfied that the intention to reflect the angle of the hip-end would represent an acceptable approach in extending the dwelling to the side, I note that the proposed extension would not show any subordination to the host dwelling. In illustration, the proposal would have no step down from the main ridge-line, whilst the intention to follow the front building line without any recess from the facade, as is recommended by SPG1, would mean that the greater width brought about by the side extension would imbalance the relationship between the appeal dwelling and No 35, without any measures of mitigation. Some subordination, with the extension's form allowing for it to have a separate but complementary identity, would have likely helped to temper the resultant imbalance.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of semi-detached dwellings in the vicinity which have been enlarged by means of side extensions. Following my site visit I walked around the immediate locality and witnessed each of these examples. Some of the extensions have worked better, visually, than others, but I did observe that none of those built appeared to be recent developments. Indeed, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I would estimate that the highlighted developments likely preceded the adoption of both the Council's UDP and its SPG.
10. In the past decade, generally, greater emphasis has been placed on design considerations and this is illustrated by relevant advice contained within the government's National Planning Policy Framework. In the circumstances, I do not consider that the existence of certain extensions, from which parallels might be drawn, is so compelling as to outweigh the harm I have identified would result to both the host dwelling and its relationship to No 35.
11. The appellant has also raised an issue relating to the Council's internal procedures but, as my remit extends only to the planning merits, or otherwise, of the proposed development, I am unable to comment on this matter.

12.I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its relationship to its semi-detached neighbour and also the surrounding area, and this would conflict with the aims and requirements of UDP Policies BE1 and H8 and also SPG1. Although I have found that the other elements of the proposal, the single-storey extension and roof extension, are acceptable forms of development I am unable to grant planning permission for these by way of a split decision as the proposed overall design shows the interdependence of all three elements. As such, no severance would be possible in the circumstances.

13.For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal does not succeed.

Timothy C King

INSPECTOR