The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 08 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/16/3157275
30 Gates Green Road, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9JW.

- 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 Dean Remfry against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
- The application Ref DC/16/02148/FULL6, dated 4 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2016.
- The development proposed is described as proposed loft conversion with raised ridge, 2 no small pitched roof dormers and 2 no Velux windows to front elevation, flat roof dormer with Juliette balcony to rear elevation. Single storey rear extension, extension and construction of new covered porch to front elevation. New driveway with dropped kerb to front of site.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host property, the street scene and thereby the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The property the subject of this appeal, 30 Gates Green Road, is a detached two-storey dwelling. While the houses immediately to the south of number 30 facing Gates Green Road are semi-detached they are nevertheless of similar age and design. As I saw, unlike the semi-detached property to the north that is of a different design style and has roof extensions front and rear, their roofs remain unaltered.

4. The appellant proposes raising the ridge of the roof by about 0.75 metres, the construction of a new large flat roofed dormer addition to the rear roof slope, complete with a Juliette balcony, and the insertion of two pitched roofed dormers and two 'velux' roof windows to the front roof slope. Single storey front and rear extensions are also proposed together with a covered front porch, the removal of the front wall and the formation of an enlarged driveway access.

5. The Council raises no concerns in respect of the single storey front and rear additions including the new porch. From what I have seen and read I do not find a reason to reach a contrary view.

6. Although number 28 does have a front dormer, they are generally not a characteristic feature of the development of similar properties to number 30 to the south or indeed within the wider street scene. While I have noted that number 30 does sit slightly lower than number 32, in my judgement, increasing the height of the ridge and the insertion of pitched roof dormers would, in the context of the design of the original house and its immediate neighbours to the south, appear as incongruous interventions in an otherwise simple and well mannered façade. Accordingly, as well as causing harm to the host property, this would also detract from the street scene and the character and appearance of the wider area.

7. Due to the proposed raising of the height of the ridge that would impact on the proportions of the rear elevation and the overall size of the proposed dormer, I consider the alterations to the rear roof slope would cause significant harm to the architectural integrity of the host building. As the roof of number 30 is open to view from the nearby public footpath, the development at the rear would cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

8. I therefore conclude in respect of the main issue that the proposed development would cause harm to the architectural integrity of the host property, the street scene and the character and appearance of the wider area. To allow the development as designed would therefore be contrary to Policies BE1, H7 and H9 of the London Borough of Bromley Unitary Development Plan (Adopted July 2006) and Policies 3.5, 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan as they relate to the quality of development and the protection of the street scene.

Other matters

9. While not specific as to where in the borough, the appellant has drawn to my attention that he is aware that the Council has permitted higher increases in ridge heights than that proposed here. Whatever the background to those cases, the existence of similar developments elsewhere is not, for the reasons given, an appropriate justification for permitting an increase in the ridge height in this case.

10. The application also proposes the removal of the front boundary wall and the formation of a new driveway with dropped kerb to the front of the site. However, limited detail of what is proposed has been submitted in respect of this part of the development. Accordingly, as these works are part of the proposed overall scheme of development, given my findings in respect of the substantive main issue, I will not go on to consider this aspect of the development further.

Conclusions

11. I have found the two single storey elements of this proposal acceptable. However, it is clear from the application drawings that these are part of the comprehensive alteration and refurbishment of the property. I therefore do not consider that they are physically and functionally independent and therefore a split decision is not appropriate in this case. Accordingly, for the reasons given

above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan, when read as a whole, and that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR