

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/16/3162508

10 Bean Road, Bexleyheath DA6 8HN

- 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 Padaychee against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 16/01621/FUL, dated 24 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is the formation of a bedroom and bathroom in the roofspace including providing 2 no dormers to the rear and part side elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a large semi-detached house located on the northern side of Bean Road, close to its junction with Red House Lane. Although there are a few bungalows along Bean Road, the majority of house types are large detached properties with a diversity of architecture styles and choice of materials, and many of which have apparently been rebuilt in recent years. However, the appeal property and its adjoining properties are unusual in that they comprise three pairs of semi-detached houses, all with steeply pitched and fully hipped roofs and all relatively unaltered. They therefore form a cohesive group within the street scene.
4. The appellant argues that the side dormer has been designed to follow the profile of the main roof and that together with matching materials, the development will reflect the form of the original house. I do not agree.
5. Although the pitch of the roof of the side dormer would be similar to the existing roof, it would have an asymmetrical form with awkward proportions, particularly the long horizontal window set within a limited depth vertical face of the dormer, but with a large roof over. The roof of the side dormer would also merge with that of the proposed large rear dormer, which would have a small pitched roof wrapped around a large flat roofed area. The combination of the

two elements would significantly alter the existing hipped roof form and I agree with the Council that it would unbalance the roof of the pair of semi-detached houses and also lead to a loss in the existing cohesive appearance of the three pairs of semi-detached houses. In my view, it would cause visual harm as a result.

6. The Council has adopted guidelines for extensions in its document 'Design and Development Control Guidelines' (DDCG) which recommends that side dormers should generally be avoided on the side of a hipped roof. Whilst such guidance should not be adhered to rigidly, it seems to me to be particularly applicable here given the visual harm that would be caused as a result of the size and design of the side dormer and its relationship with the rear dormer.
7. I acknowledge that it makes practical sense to insert the proposed staircase to the roofspace above the existing staircase, and that there is a headroom issue, but I do not consider that necessarily results in the proposed design put forward. I also acknowledge that the property is a large house on a relatively large plot and is therefore well suited in principle for some form of extensions which would provide increased living accommodation. However, that does not carry greater weight in my view, over the visual harm arising.
8. For the above reasons the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy H9 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 2004 and guidance within the DDCG in that it would not be compatible with the character of the existing building and adjacent buildings.
9. Accordingly the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR