

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6th February 2017

by Alison Roland BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 February 2017

Appeal Ref: D5120/D/16/3161731

46 Dartford Road, Bexley, DA5 2AT.

- 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 and Mrs R Prasad against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref: 16/01979/FUL, dated 2 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey side extension at 46 Dartford Road, Bexley, DA5 2AT, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 16/01979/FUL, dated 2 August 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No: DR/01: Existing Plans; Drawing No: DR/02: Proposed Plans; Site Location Plan: Scale: 1:1250.
 - 3) The brickwork to the external walls of the extension shall be in accordance with details or samples of materials which have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the implications of the proposal for the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 1960's style house occupying a corner plot at the junction of Dartford Road with Mornington Close. It has been subject to a two storey side extension and in consequence, it has a strong horizontal emphasis along both front and rear elevations. The proposed two storey side extension
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would accentuate the linear proportions still further, resulting in an unusually wide frontage to the dwelling.

4. However, there is considerable diversity in house types along the frontage of Dartford Road, with some dwellings being orientated with a gable facing the road, whilst others like the appeal property and its neighbours Nos 42 and 44 have a strong rectangular form and present a wider facade to the street. Being on a corner plot, the property also enjoys a slightly wider frontage than many others in the vicinity. This being the case, whilst the resultant dwelling would be wider than most, it would not particularly draw the eye. Its frontage width would also to some extent be relieved through the fact the façade is at present broken up into distinct vertical components, with different coloured brickwork and fenestration treatment.
5. In particular, No 44 across the cul-de-sac entrance to Mornington Court also has an exceptionally wide frontage, having been subject to a two storey side extension. I take the Council's point that it has been built at variance with the approved plans, which depict a wide gable to the frontage, breaking up its horizontal massing. Nonetheless, the fact is that the extension as built is absent the aforementioned gable and in consequence, the resultant property has an unusually wide frontage, not dissimilar in proportions to that proposed here.
6. I accept that the resultant frontage width of the dwelling would be somewhat wider than No 44 (the Council cite a two storey frontage width of 17.4m compared to around 14 metres for no 44). However, I do not consider the difference would be so disparate as to draw attention to the appeal property. Whilst I do have minor concerns with the resultant elongated roofscape, on balance, I do not consider it would appear appreciably different to that at No 44. Moreover, the linear proportions of the two properties would complement each other, either side of the entrance to Mornington Court.
7. Overall in relation to the main issue, I conclude that the proposal would satisfactorily harmonise with the prevailing character and appearance of the area. I therefore find no conflict with saved Policies ENV39 and H9 of the Bexley Unitary Development Plan (2004) (UDP), which seek to secure a high standard of design in development proposals which are compatible with the character of the existing building and surrounding area. I am mindful of the advice in the UDP *Design and Development Control Guidelines* which states that in general extensions should be subordinate to the existing building. However, the phrase *in general* at 2.2.1 implies a degree of latitude. Whilst the extension would not appear as a subordinate addition to the host dwelling, for the reasons given, I nonetheless consider it would have an acceptable relationship thereto.

Other Matters

8. The occupier of No 5 Mornington Court has raised concerns about loss of privacy and overshadowing. However, given the separation distance between the appeal site and that property, I am satisfied the proposals would have no adverse effect in these regards. Whilst the proposal would result in a larger than average property, it would not for the reasons given, amount to overdevelopment of the site and a considerable amount of open frontage and rear garden area would remain.

Conditions

9. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement of development, the Council suggest conditions confining the approval to specified plans and requiring the use of matching materials. A specified plans condition is necessary for the avoidance of doubt. However, a matching materials condition could create ambiguity as there are different colours of brickwork employed in the existing building. I shall instead, require samples of the exterior brickwork to be submitted for Council approval to secure a satisfactory finish.

ALISON ROLAND

INSPECTOR