

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/17/3170471

5 Crossway, Petts Wood, Orpington BR5 1PF

- 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 Liam Nolan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/16/05764/FULL6, dated 16 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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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 site is located on the west side of Crossway, and comprises a semi-detached house which has been extended in the past with a two storey side extension. The character of the area is that of detached and semi-detached properties all of a similar period dating from the 1920s or 30s and it forms part of the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC).
4. The appellant points out that there are differing house types in the immediate vicinity and that several have been extended in different ways, including flat roof sections. However, whilst I acknowledge that to be the case, I observed that the predominant characteristic of the roof areas in the vicinity remains that of a steeply pitched and hipped roof, even where flat roof sections have been inserted. That is also the case for the appeal property, where despite the flat roof area, the hipped roof is the dominant element. In that context, I find that the proposed end facing large gable section of the roof, would introduce an incongruous element in the roofscape, which would be more prominent than the existing flat roof section and at odds with the prevailing character of roofscape in the vicinity. It would be particularly prominent in the street scene when travelling in a southerly direction along the Crossway and would cause visual harm as a result.

5. I note that in designating ASRCs, the Council had regard to areas which amongst other criteria, had a distinctive character and with the same readily identifiable characteristics. In this instance, I consider that applies not only to the architectural features on the dwellings in the vicinity, but also to the distinctive roof forms as referred to above. Changes to that roof form in the manner proposed would gradually erode that character, contrary to the purpose of designation. The Council has also adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to No 1 'General Design Principles' and No 2 'Residential Design Guidance' which seek to ensure that roof extensions respect the form and appearance of the existing roof and dormers should not be over dominant. In my view the proposal would not comply with such guidance for the reasons given.
6. The Council is also concerned that the development would be apparent from Petts Wood Road where the rear of the property is visible. I attach less weight to that particular concern given that the gable feature would be less apparent from that direction, and the dormer would be similar in design to an existing dormer at No 3 Crossway, albeit larger in size.
7. I acknowledge that matching materials would help to integrate the development within the roofscape but in my view it would not overcome the harm identified. I also note that the development might possibly have benefited from permitted development rights if the property had not been extended. However, that is not the situation before me and I have reached my findings accordingly.
8. I note that the Council raises no concerns from an amenity point of view, given the degree of mutual overlooking that currently exists, and I see no reason to reach a different view.
9. For the above reason, the proposed development would be contrary to Policies H8 and H10 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 2006 and SPG Nos 1 and 2 in that it would not respect the character and be compatible with the surrounding area, it would result in a large and over dominant roof extension and would not respect and complement the established and individual qualities of the ASRC.
10. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR