

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by Mike Worden BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 29th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/17/3171183

Brillig, 2B Pope Road, Bromley, Kent BR2 9QB

- 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 Ken Brewer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/17/00155/FULL6, dated 11 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 3 March 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 proposed development on the character and appearance of the area with particular relevance to street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached house on a street of a variety of house styles, types and sizes. Pope Road between Bromley Common and Chatterton Road, is relatively short in length but includes houses which are detached, hipped roof semi-detached, gable fronted semi-detached, and terraced.
 4. Midway along the road there is a Victorian detached cottage, and at the opposite end to the appeal property there is a block of flats facing Chatterton Road. Directly opposite the appeal site, a detached property has been significantly altered and extended recently and adjacent to that property, on the corner with, and facing, Bromley Common, a large property has been extended and converted to a veterinary surgery. There is no particular rhythm or distinctive style to the street, indeed the variety provides its character.
 5. Both the appeal property and its adjoining semi, have been extended sideways and both incorporate integral garages with development above. Both have hipped roofs. Whilst the pair is not exactly symmetrical, the properties are seen as a well-designed, coherent, and reasonably balanced whole, which I consider is important in terms of its appearance.
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6. The proposed development would extend the hipped roof of the appeal property to create new living accommodation and create a rear dormer extension running the full width of the extended roof.
7. The proposed development would further unacceptably unbalance the roofscape of the pair of semi-detached properties by increasing the mass of the roof and forming a part hip and part gable extension. This would lead to an over dominant and bulky roof structure which would jar with the existing stepped down hipped roof line of its adjoining neighbour.
8. Pope Road consists of a mix of house styles and types and there is not a particular rhythm of roofscape as a result. However, the semi-detached properties are part of the character of the street and their contribution to the streetscape would be significantly eroded by the significant unbalancing of their rooflines to the degree proposed.
9. This is particularly important given their prominent location at the entrance to the road from Bromley Common. I consider that the proposed development would therefore have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the street.
10. The proposed rear dormer extension would run the full width of extended roof and would be dominant in views to the rear of the property. However, the visual impact of the dormers would be mitigated by some extent by the existence of trees in rear gardens and by the rather limited views which could be gained of them from surrounding streets.
11. I note from my site visit that there are a number of rear dormers in the vicinity, including one on the house on the corner of Pope Road and Bromley Common and so I do not consider that they are an uncharacteristic feature in the local area.
12. Whilst I do not find that the rear dormers would cause particular harm to the character and appearance of the area, this does not outweigh the harm to the street scene which would result from the roof extension. I therefore conclude that the proposed development, through the creation of a bulky form and the considerable unbalancing of the roof line of the semi-detached dwellings as a pair, would be harmful to character and appearance of the area.
13. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policy BE1 and H8 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 2006 which seek to ensure that new development is appropriate for its surroundings and respects local character. I consider that these policies are generally consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and so have afforded them considerable weight.
14. I also consider that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy 7.4 of the London Plan 2015 which aims to ensure that new developments respect and contribute positively to local character.

Other matters

15. The appellant has drawn my attention to the redevelopment of the property immediately opposite the appeal site. Significant changes have recently taken place to this property and the appellant has provided before and after photographs. I was also able to see the completed development on my site visit.

16. The redevelopment of that property has changed the form of the development and raised the height of its roof. Nevertheless, I consider that the circumstances and characteristics are different to those of the appeal site as the property is a detached building which makes its own contribution to the street scene, whereas the appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling and the proposed development would significantly unbalance the pair of dwellings when viewed from the street.
17. I have already made reference to the other development referred to by the appellant in his statement of case, on the corner of Pope Road and Bromley Common. I am not aware of the particular circumstances of that case and in any event have decided this case on its own merits on the evidence before me.
18. In its officer's report, the Council does not consider that there would be any undue harm to living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties as a result of the proposed development. Having considered the evidence before me, I agree with the Council's view in this regard.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mike Worden

INSPECTOR