
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 June 2017

by C Jack BSc(Hons) MA MA(TP) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/17/3172690

12 Blyth Road, Bromley BR1 3RX

- 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 Varinder Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/16/04970/FULL6, dated 26 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion by way of two side dormers and one rear roof dormer including two front Velux windows.
-

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.

Reasons

3. 12 Blyth Road (No 12) is a large, detached residential property that has been divided into several self-contained flats while generally retaining the appearance of a single house. It is situated in a predominantly residential area, a short distance from the main A21 London Road. No 12 is not subject to any specific designations but it is an attractive building in the street scene and features interesting detailing to the front elevation.
4. There is currently one rooflight in the front elevation, a modest pitched-roof dormer in the side elevation facing No 10, and a further rooflight and modest flat-roofed dormer at the rear. Nearby properties are of similar style and proportions, contributing to a pleasant character and appearance in the street scene at this point. A number of properties have dormers visible from the road, including a front dormer at 14 Blyth Road (No 14) and a side dormer at 10 Blyth Road (No 10), which is in use as a children's day nursery. It is proposed to provide a second bedroom and bathroom in the loft space above an existing 1-bed third floor flat, facilitated by dormer roof extensions to both sides and the rear, together with two rooflights in the front roofslope.
5. The side dormers would be clearly visible from the road and would substantially dominate the existing roof, giving a top-heavy appearance, brought about by

their excessive size and bulk. Furthermore, neither dormer would be set down from the main ridge and, while the dormer facing No 10 would be set in from the eaves, the dormer facing No 14 would not be set in to any significant degree, thus exacerbating the bulkiness of that larger dormer. This variance in the position of each side dormer would also result in an unbalanced appearance from the road, to the detriment of the character of the host property and its appearance in the wider street scene. Furthermore, the new dormer facing No 10 would have an awkward and uncomfortable relationship with the existing smaller dormer, which would be set lower in the roofslope than the new dormer. While this latter factor would not be readily visible from the road, it would nonetheless have an additional adverse effect on the overall appearance of the host property.

6. The rear dormer would also not be visible from the road but it would have a similar uncomfortable relationship with the existing rear dormer. Its overall scale and relationship to the main ridge would also give it an excessively large and bulky appearance, dominating the rear roofslope. While this would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the area than the side dormers, it would nonetheless have a further adverse effect on the overall character of No 12. Moreover, the proposal would generally conflict with the Council's adopted Residential Design Guidance 2004 (SPG2), which advises that large or dominant dormers which would harm the overall appearance of the building should be avoided, albeit dormers are common in many parts of the borough.
7. While dormers are fairly commonplace nearby, they are generally of a significantly smaller scale in relation to the host roofscopes than the proposed dormers, including those at the Nos 10 and 14 adjacent to the appeal site. I also noted the nearby Travelodge at the corner of Blyth Road with London Road. This modern hotel building is of a different overall scale and character to most properties in Blyth Road and features a substantial mansard type roof profile. I am not persuaded that the Travelodge, which is separated from No 12 by several buildings, and which is of a different form and type to the appeal property, lends any significant weight in favour of a scheme for unduly bulky and unbalanced roof extensions that would be out of keeping with the host property at No 12.
8. In light of the above, I conclude that the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with saved Policy BE1 of the Bromley Unitary Development Plan 2006 (UDP), which seeks a high standard of design including that development should complement the scale and form of adjacent buildings and not detract from the street scene. It further conflicts with saved Policy H8 of the UDP, which among other things seeks to ensure that dormer windows are of a size and design appropriate to the roofscape and sited away from prominent roof pitches. These policies pre-date the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the Framework) but they are generally consistent with its design aims and I have given them substantial weight in this appeal.

Other Matters

9. I have considered the social and economic benefits that the additional accommodation provided would bring about. However, these would be very modest in relation to the enlargement of one flat and as such do not outweigh the significant harms that I have identified above.

Conclusion

10. For these reasons, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Catherine Jack

INSPECTOR