

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 July 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 26 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/17/3173085
21 Elmwood Drive, Bexley, DA5 3PT.

- 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 Ms Sally Heather against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 16/03255/FUL dated 20 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed rear dormer roof extension and roof window to side elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear dormer roof extension and roof window to side elevation at 21 Elmwood Drive, Bexley, DA5 3PT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/03255/FUL dated 20 December 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: SNA/910/P/01 Revision A, SNA/910/P/02 Revision A and 1:1250 scale location plan.
 - 3) The external materials to be used in the construction of the roof extension hereby permitted shall match those of the host dwelling.

Main Issues

2. The first main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. The second main issue is the effect of the scheme on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent properties, with particular regard to privacy and visual impact.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The Appeal site is located in an established residential area that is predominantly characterised by a mixture of single and two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings. Some of the dwellings have been extended with
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loft conversions and there are a number of roof lights on front elevations in addition to a number of rear dormer additions.

4. The Appeal dwelling comprises one of a pair of semi-detached two storey houses and is located alongside a pair of bungalows. The roof space of the Appeal dwelling has already been converted and the second floor accommodation is served by roof lights in the front and rear roof slopes.
5. Together and amongst other things policies H9 and ENV39 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP) seek to ensure that new development is to a high standard of design and layout. Extensions should be compatible with the host building, neighbouring buildings and the area. In addition they should not have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. The UDP Design and Development Control Guidelines (SPG), has similar objectives. It advises that roof extensions should not exceed the height of the host dwelling and ideally dormer windows should be located in the rear roof slope and set in from the rear facing wall of the dwelling.
6. The above policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which, amongst other things, states that new development should respond to local character and reflect the identity of local surroundings.
7. The proposed dormer window would be located on the rear roof slope of the dwelling and would be both lower than the ridge line and set back from the rear facing wall of the host dwelling. The roof of the proposed dormer would respect the proportions and pitch of the host dwelling and its glazing would respect the proportions of the existing windows, albeit they would not follow the alignment of the windows below. At the same time the proposed dormer window would be comparable to other dormer extensions in the locality. The proposed new roof light would be modest in size and form and would match the existing roof lights on the front roof slope.
8. Accordingly, subject to the use of matching materials the proposal would respect and blend in satisfactorily with the host dwelling. As suggested by the Council this is a matter that could be dealt with by condition. The Council has also suggested the imposition of a condition which requires adherence to the submitted drawings, which is necessary in the interests of certainty.
9. I conclude on the first main issue that the proposed roof additions would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the varied character of the surrounding dwellings and the area as a whole. It would therefore comply with policies ENV39 and H9 of the UDP, the SPG and the NPPF.

Living conditions

10. The proposed dormer window would serve a bedroom and would be located above an existing large bedroom window. It would be set in from the boundaries of the immediately adjacent dwellings on either side and would be located in excess of 20 metres from the rear of the dwellings located to the east.
11. Whilst the proposal would result in an additional large window facing into the rear garden environment, the outlook from the proposed window would be

comparable to that of the existing first floor bedroom window and the rear bedroom windows of other two storey dwellings in the immediate and wider area. As indicated above large dormer windows are not uncommon in the locality and the proposed dormer window has been designed to respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.

12. I therefore conclude on the second main issue that the proposal would not prejudice or have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings due to visual impact or loss of privacy. It would therefore comply with policies H9 and ENV39 of the UDP and the SPG.

Conclusion

13. Having regard to the conclusions on the main issues and having regard to all other matters raised the Appeal is allowed.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR