

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 August 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/17/3178053

5 Forest Ridge, Beckenham, Bromley, BR3 3NH

- 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 Pure Design Group Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/17/00277/FULL6, dated 22 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is for a first floor side extension and new bay window to front elevation at first floor level and roof alterations to incorporate rear roof-lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor side extension and new bay window to the front elevation at first floor level and roof alterations to incorporate rear roof-lights at 5 Forest Ridge, Beckenham, Bromley, BR3 3NH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/17/00277/FULL6, dated 22 January 2017, 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: 5FR-GA.00 Revision A, 5FR-GA01 Revision A, 5FR-GA02 Revision A, 5FR-GA03 Revision B and 5FR-GA04 Revision A.
 - 3) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority the external materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. Forest Ridge is characterised by uniformly designed pairs of semi-detached two storey dwellings from a limited palette of designs. Typically they have fully hipped roofs, with split ridge lines between dwellings and some have catslide roofs to the sides. These roofs together with two storey projecting bay
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windows with gable roofs on the front elevations contribute to the strong sense of rhythm and uniformity within the street scene. The gaps between the pairs of dwellings above ground floor level varies due to the alignment of the road, the detailed design of the dwellings and the incidence of a variety of side extensions.

4. Amongst other things policies BE1 and H8 of the London Borough of Bromley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) require new development to be of a high standard of design. The scale, form and materials of domestic extensions should respect or complement the existing dwelling and extensions should respect the space or gaps between buildings where they contribute to the character of the area.
5. Policy H9 of the UDP states that a minimum one metre gap should be retained between the flank wall of a two storey domestic side extension and the boundary of the dwelling. The supporting text to policy H9 of the UDP explains that adequate separation should be retained between dwellings to safeguard privacy, to prevent a terracing effect or a cramped appearance and to protect the high spatial standards of the area.
6. Consistent with policies BE1 and H8 and the objective of policy H9 of the UDP, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that new development should respond to local character, reflect the identity of local surroundings and add to the quality of the area.
7. The Appeal dwelling comprises one of the uniformly designed semi-detached two storey dwellings with central two storey projecting bay windows and catslide roofs on either side. With the proposal the flank wall of the Appeal dwelling would be raised and the existing catslide roof and dormer window would be replaced with a fully hipped roof. The detailed design of the proposed extension would respect that of the host and other dwellings along Forest Ridge. As a consequence the character and appearance of the host dwelling would be readily assimilated into the street scene.
8. The Appeal dwelling is situated on the inside of a slight bend in the road. As a consequence the site is tapered in shape and the distance between the existing flank wall of the dwelling and the side boundary of the site ranges between 0.8 metres at the rear and approximately 2.5 metres at the front. From the street scene the perceived gap between the Appeal dwelling and the adjacent dwelling at 3 Forest Ridge (No.3) is generous.
9. With the proposal the side wall of the proposed first floor extension would be the same as the ground floor. Accordingly, it would breach the one metre gap by some 0.2 metres for a short distance towards the rear of the dwelling. However for most of the depth of the building the required one metre gap would be exceeded and the dwelling would continue to appear spacious on the site and within the street scene. It would respect the spatial characteristics of the road and would not result in terracing effect or a cramped relationship between the appeal dwelling and the dwelling at No.3.
10. The Council has suggested the imposition of conditions relating to the use of matching external materials and adherence to the submitted drawings. Both of these conditions are necessary to ensure that the proposed extension blends in appropriately with the host dwelling and in the interests of certainty.

11. For these reasons I conclude that the resultant dwelling would respect and reinforce the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. The proposal would fully comply with policies BE1 and H8 of the UDP and the objectives of policy H9 of the UDP. Accordingly, in this instance these factors weigh firmly in favour of allowing the Appeal, notwithstanding the conflict with the precise wording of policy H9 of the UDP.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR