



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2017

by Clive Tokley MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/17/3179733

88 Forge Lane, Higham, Rochester, ME3 7AH.

- 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 David Meade against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20170040, dated 29 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area and its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 90 Forge Lane as regards outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached house (with No 86) and a similar pair lies to the north. To the south, between No 88 and the junction with Gravesend Road, are two detached bungalows. In order to accommodate the curve in the road the bungalows are aligned at an angle to the pairs of semis. This relationship combined with the lower roof line of the bungalows results in the flank wall of No 88 and the roof of the rear "outrigger" being in view when approached from Gravesend Road.
4. The proposed end gable would be smaller than the existing and the roof of the proposed new outrigger would be lower than that of the existing (and remodelled) outrigger. When viewed from the junction to the south the new elements would be seen against the backdrop of the existing and from that direction the flank elevation would not appear out of place. The slacker pitch of the widened outrigger roof and the introduction of the small rear gable would result in an ungainly appearance at the rear but this would not be publicly visible and would not unacceptably detract from the character of the area.
5. The drawings show a line between the existing dwelling and the extension at roof and first floor wall levels; however there is no indication of any structural break in either of those elements. When seen from the front and when

approaching from the north the increase in the width of the house would be apparent. The lowered ridge line of the proposal would be of some benefit in distinguishing between the extension and the original building; however the absence of a clear break in the roof plane and front wall would unbalance the appearance of the semi-detached pair and reveal the bulk of the proposal. As a result of its bulk and design the extension would compete with the scale of the existing building and would unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of both the building and the area.

6. On this issue I conclude that the proposal would conflict with Policy CS19 of the *Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014* (the CS) which indicates (amongst other things) that new development should be visually attractive and should conserve the character of the local built environment.

Living conditions

7. The bungalow at No 90 Forge Lane is positioned at an angle to No 88. It has been extended at the rear and the side; however those additions are not shown on the submitted drawings. At my site visit I saw that the rear extension of the bungalow projects to a depth roughly equivalent to the proposal. The flank wall of that extension appears to have no windows and the proposal would have no effect on the outlook from or light reaching any rear-facing windows within it.
8. The bungalow's side extension has the appearance of a single garage with a mainly flat roof. The Council and the appellant indicate that it contains bedroom accommodation and the bow window at the front is a clear indication that it is not used as a garage. I was not able to enter the building and therefore I cannot determine whether it comprises one room or is divided. It is therefore unclear whether the rear-facing window is the only source of light and outlook to the bedroom.
9. The rear-facing window has an outlook into a roughly triangular area defined by the flank wall of the rear extension of No 90 and the angled boundary of the appeal property. The flank wall of the proposal would encroach into the outlook from this window and would be a dominating presence over the small area of garden. The outlook from the rear window has been restricted by the rear extension at No 90 which prevents a view into the rear garden. I consider that in these circumstances the occupier of that dwelling cannot reasonably expect to enjoy the quality of outlook that would have been possible without that extension. The main aspects of the bungalow are to the front and rear and would be unaffected by the proposal. Taking account of the living conditions within the bungalow as a whole the effect of the proposal on the outlook from the rear window would not be sufficiently harmful to justify the refusal of permission.
10. The proposal would be likely to cut out some late evening sunlight in the summer months; however the proposed rendered finish could result in beneficial reflected light. I consider that it would be unlikely to materially detract from natural light reaching the bedroom.
11. On this issue I have concluded that the proposal would not unacceptably detract from living conditions and that in that respect it would not conflict with CS Policy CS19.

Conclusion

12. I have concluded that the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 90 Forge Lane as regards outlook or light. However I have concluded that it would unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area and for that reason the appeal should not succeed.

Clive Tokley

INSPECTOR