

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2017

by M Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/17/3179757

69 Ravensworth Road, Mottingham, London, SE9 4LX

- 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 & Mrs Williams against the decision of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/17/01214/FULL6, dated 14 March 2017, was refused by Notice dated 15 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a part one/two storey side/rear extension, porch canopy and rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. During the course of the appeal, the appellant has drawn my attention to the recent approval of planning permission granted on 5 September 2017, for an alternative scheme at the appeal site (*LPA Ref. 17/02765/FULL6*) for a part one/two storey side/rear extension, porch canopy and rooflights. In light of the relevance of this decision to the appeal proposals, I have provided both the appellant and the Council with the opportunity to comment on the implications of this decision, and refer further to these comments and the decision in my reasoning.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, streetscene and area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is occupied by a two-storey end of terrace dwelling, set on the broadly eastern side of Ravensworth Road, with a significant area of open space immediately adjacent to the property boundary to the north and providing a footpath link through to Prestbury Square. The rear garden of the appeal site slopes upwards to the east and tapers to its narrowest at the eastern end.
 5. The scheme approved under the September 2017 planning permission proposed a 1 metre narrower first floor side extension, resulting in some minor changes to the roof form. However, it is evident that the scale and form of the approved development in virtually all other respects is the same as the appeal
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proposal. Having had regard to the approved scheme, I consider this development to represent a realistic fall-back position, and as a consequence I have limited my assessment of the appeal proposal to the impact of the increased width of the first floor.

6. The appeal site occupies a prominent location within the street scene, appearing essentially as a 'corner plot' due to the position of the adjacent open space. The proposed development would as a consequence be highly visible and thus the visual impact, particularly to the first floor or roof, would be pronounced. I acknowledge that the proposed development includes a set-back from the front elevation of the dwelling and set-down of the ridge at roof level, and would seek to incorporate matching materials. However, I am satisfied that despite the appeal proposals being only 1 metre wider at first floor level than the approved scheme, the overall bulk and scale of the larger extension would be more marked and would not appear as a subservient addition to the property. The additional width to the boundary of the property, as viewed from Ravensworth Road and the resultant two-storey built form on the site boundary, would visually overwhelm and compete with the original dwelling to the detriment of the character and appearance of both the area, and the building.
7. I have had regard to the various references which have been made to other extensions which have been undertaken within the vicinity of the appeal site, and have noted the contention that the form of the appeal proposals would be more aesthetically pleasing and preferable to the other examples.
8. I observed the disposition and form of the existing extensions at Nos. 120 & 122 Ravensworth Road, and have noted the reference to the absence of either a set-back from the front elevation or set-down of the roof ridge in these instances. However, whilst I would acknowledge that the decision for No. 120 Ravensworth Road would appear to have been taken during the course of the current Development Plan and referred to Supplementary Planning Guidance, I do not have any detail or context provided in relation to this decision, or any information in respect of when the development at No. 122 Ravensworth Road was undertaken. For the reasons I have already set out, the design of the proposed development would nevertheless have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the property and area. Therefore, irrespective of any perceived improvement on the existing extensions, I am not persuaded that any similarities in circumstance with the appeal proposal would be sufficient to overcome the harm which I have identified in respect of the impact on the dwelling, area and the streetscene.
9. As a consequence, I am satisfied that the proposed development would result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, street scene and the host dwelling. This would conflict with saved Policies H8 and BE1 of the London Borough of Bromley Unitary Development Plan 2006, and the guidance contained within Supplementary Planning Guidance 1: General Design Guidance, and Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Residential Design Principle. These policies set out that all development proposals will be expected to be of a high standard of design, should complement the scale and form of the host building, and should not detract from the existing street scene and area, whilst residential side extensions should be subordinate in character and appearance.

Conclusions

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

M Seaton

INSPECTOR