
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2017

by Roy Merrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 08 December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/17/3180199

20 Hamilton Road, Sidcup DA15 7HB

- 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 L Stanton against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 17/01340/FUL, dated 2 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion and internal alterations at 20 Hamilton Road, Sidcup DA15 7HB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 17/01340/FUL, dated 2 June 2017 and 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: 587-01; 587-02; 587-03; 587-04.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the Christ Church Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. Hamilton Road, where the appeal site is located, together with the adjacent Stanhope Road are both recognised within the CA Appraisal and Management Plan 2008 as featuring buildings that make an important contribution to the character of the area. The appraisal recognises the repetition in architectural detail associated with the front of the close but semi-detached properties as producing unified developments of substantial character. There is no information before me that would lead me to take a contrary view.
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4. Though it would occupy most of the rear roof plane, the proposed dormer extension would be set in from the gable wall of the dwelling and within the ridge and eaves lines of the main roof. It would therefore broadly respect the proportion of the roof and the form of the existing rear addition, which would remain subordinate to the main dwelling.
5. Due to its elevation, the extension would not appear prominent from the immediate surroundings. It would have the greatest visual impact on views of the rear of the dwelling from Stanhope Road between gaps in built development. However from this location, the existing rear dormer extension to the adjacent dwelling at No 18 is already visible. Though further away, this feature would serve to mitigate any pronounced sense of change along the street scene. Even if the Council was unable to exercise control over the dormer to No 18 at the time of its construction, it is nevertheless present today and merits due consideration.
6. Furthermore the proposed dormer would not be seen to alter any strong sense of uniformity and therefore visual rhythm in design along the street. Accordingly there would be no harm to the aforementioned cohesive alignment of dwellings, identified as key characteristics of the CA. In addition because of its relatively limited scale and set back from Stanhope Road, the dormer would have a recessive appearance that would not tend to draw the eye as an incongruous feature, including in relation to the gable and rear addition of the dwelling which would be substantially obscured from this perspective.
7. Whilst I note that the Council has previously refused planning permission for a dormer extension at No 21 Hamilton Road, I have been provided with little detail in relation to that case. In any event I must decide each case on its own individual planning merits.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the CA. For the reasons set out above, the development would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Accordingly it would conform with Policies H3, H9, ENV39 and ENV46 of the London Borough of Bexley Unitary Development Plan 2004; the Council's Design and Development Control Guidelines 2 and the CA Appraisal and Management Plan insofar as they seek to promote good design which respects the original dwelling and adjacent buildings and preserves the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Conditions and Conclusion

9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should succeed and planning permission be granted.
10. Conditions specifying the plans and requiring details to be agreed of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the dormer extension are needed to provide certainty and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Roy Merrett

INSPECTOR