
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2019

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/19/3225063

31 Ash Crescent, Higham, Rochester ME3 7BA.

- 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 Joe Fallarino against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20181300, dated 18 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is a front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a front dormer at 31 Ash Crescent, Higham Rochester ME3 7BA, in accordance with the terms of application ref. 20181300 dated 18 December 2018, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) This development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.
 - 2) This permission shall relate to the following plans: TAB/06/44 (existing elevation and plan views), TAB/06/45 (location plan), TAB/06/46A (existing and proposed block plans), TAB/06/50B (proposed sections and plan views), and TAB/06/53 (existing and proposed roof views).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises one half of a pair of semi-detached bungalows located on the western side of Ash Crescent, a road predominantly characterised by similar properties. Although the appeal property does not currently have a front dormer window, there are many nearby examples.
4. In terms of the immediate street scene, there is an existing large front dormer at no. 42 opposite the site and side dormers at no. 36, a detached property, to the south east, which are clearly visible. The properties in Beech Grove, just to the north of the site, are of very similar design. Again many have flat roofed

- dormers to the front, including for instance the semi-detached properties comprising nos. 25 and 27, and 29 and 31. The semi-detached pair comprising nos. 25 and 27 occupy a position opposite the end of Ash Crescent and are clearly visible within the wider street scene of the appeal site.
5. The proposal would introduce a small flat roofed dormer, roughly centrally within the deep roofslope of the property. It would occupy about a third of its width and would be set up from the eaves level such that a considerable part of the roofslope would remain, within which two small rooflights would be sited.
 6. I consider that, by reason of its relatively modest size and resultant retention of the majority of the original roofslope, the proposed dormer would appear as a subordinate addition and would not be an overly dominant feature. Whilst the attached semi-detached property retains its original roofslope with no additions or alterations, I do not consider that the proposal would significantly unbalance the symmetry of the pair as their original identical form would still be appreciated.
 7. As noted above, front flat roofed dormers are an established feature of the wider street scene, both as doubles and singles on semi-detached pairs of dwellings, many much larger than that proposed on the appeal property. As such I do not find that it would be an inappropriate form of addition.
 8. I therefore find that the proposed dormer would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider streetscene. It would accord with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) which, amongst other things, seeks development that is visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive, that integrates well with the surrounding local area and makes a positive contribution to the street scene.
 9. The Council has referred to a previous appeal decision relating to the property¹. That proposed a much larger front dormer, which the Inspector in that case found to be not as 'well mannered' as others within the area and discordant in terms of its alignment and proportions, concluding that on balance it would appear as a incongruous addition. The circumstances of the case before me are different, in the main, due to the much smaller size of dormer proposed. Another appeal decision referred to by the Council does not appear to relate to the area in which the appeal site is located and I thus find it of limited relevance.

Conclusions

10. I consider that the proposal would accord with the development plan and there are no material considerations to indicate otherwise. In respect of conditions, as well as one to relate to the approved plans in the interests of proper planning, a condition to require matching materials is necessary in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.
11. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted.

P Jarvis

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/K2230/D/18/3194112