



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/19/3226099

322A Croydon Road, Beckenham BR3 4HR

- 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 Samad Mahin against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/18/04750/FULL1, dated 18 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is the construction of an 'L'-shaped rear dormer window and a first floor 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 proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property, and;
 - living conditions for occupiers of the neighbouring property at 324 Croydon Road, as well as future occupiers of the host property, with particular regard to daylight, sunlight and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. 322 Croydon Road is a two-storey mid-terrace property, with a commercial use on the ground floor and a residential flat, No 322A, above. This arrangement appears typical of the block of seven properties of which the appeal site is part. The property is not listed, nor does it lie within a conservation area.
4. The property has a rear outrigger which at the time of my site visit was being extended. At first floor level the rear outrigger occupies rather more than half the width of the appeal property, leaving a narrow gap between the building and the boundary with No 324.
5. The proposed development would extend the depth of the first floor outrigger at No 322A by approximately 1.5 metres, and widen it by around half a metre. It would also add an L-shaped dormer extension at second floor level. This would occupy most of the main rear roof slope, with the rear projection extending to around half the depth of the outrigger.

6. The arrangement of the terrace and other surrounding buildings means that the additions at the rear would be only slightly visible from the public street in Gowland Place, and then only in a fleeting glimpse. However, while public views would be limited, the extensions to No 322A would be seen from several neighbouring properties.
7. The proposed development would significantly alter the appearance of the host property. The increased size of the rear outrigger combined with the addition of the large dormer on the rear and side-facing roof slopes, would mean that the additions would appear bulky and out of scale with the host property. The rear extension would appear very cramped because of the narrow width of the site and the already small separation distances between the rear extensions of neighbouring properties. This would be exacerbated by widening and lengthening the rear extension to No 322A. As a result of these factors, the proposed development would be harmful to the appearance of the host property.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of properties nearby with dormer extensions. None of the examples provided appears to be of the L-shaped form proposed in this case but, in any event, the fact that similar dormers may already exist in the surrounding area is not in itself a reason to allow unacceptable development. I have considered this appeal proposal on its own merits and find that it would cause harm as described above.
9. I conclude therefore that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property. It would conflict with Policies 6 and 37 of the January 2019 Bromley Local Plan (the Local Plan), which seek to ensure that residential extensions respect the scale and form of both the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Living conditions

10. The narrow gap between the outriggers of Nos 322A and 324 means that daylight and sunlight reaching the rear windows of both properties is already limited. Because of the way the main building is stepped, the main rear wall of No 322A sits forward of No 324 by around 1 metre. This effectively puts the first floor window on the main rear elevation of that property in an 'alcove', limiting its daylight and sunlight even further. Extending the rear of No 322A both backwards and upwards would increase overshadowing and result in an additional reduction of both daylight and sunlight reaching the windows of habitable rooms on the ground and first floors at the rear of No 324, in particular the 'alcove' window just described. This would make these rooms more gloomy, adversely affecting the living conditions of the occupants of this neighbouring property. A similar loss of daylight and sunlight would also affect the first floor room (identified as 'bedroom 3' on submitted plans) at the rear of No 322A, leading to an adverse effect on the living conditions of occupants of that room.
11. Increasing the height and depth of No 322A as proposed would further restrict the already limited outlook from the habitable room windows of No 324. It would also lead to the window of 'bedroom 3' of No 322A having a very constrained outlook to the rear. It would increase the sense of enclosure in what is already a very narrow and tightly-packed rear space. In these regards, the development proposal would again have a considerable adverse effect on

living conditions both for residents of the flats at No 324, and for the future occupier of the first floor 'bedroom 3' of No 322A.

12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would result in significant harm to the occupants of Nos 322A and 324 arising from an unacceptable loss of daylight, sunlight and outlook. The proposal would conflict with Policy 37 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that adequate daylight and sunlight can penetrate between buildings, and that the amenity of residents of neighbouring buildings and future occupiers of the host property in respect of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing are not harmed.

Other matters

13. The Government is seeking to significantly boost the supply of homes. Enlarging the appeal property would not increase the number of housing units available. It is not therefore a factor in the scheme's favour.
14. I recognise that there would potentially be social, economic and environmental benefits from the property being repaired and upgraded. However, significant works to renovate the building were underway at the time of my site visit. There is therefore no substantive evidence to suggest the current proposal is the only way of bringing the building back into beneficial use. It is not therefore a justification for permitting a development I have found to be harmful.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Cryan

Inspector