



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2019

by Neil Smith BA Hons BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/T2215/D/19/3230369

2 The Chenies, Dartford, Kent DA12 7NP

- 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 Julian Sherriff against the decision of Dartford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DA/18/01595/FUL, dated 7 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 28 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extensions including the formation of a first floor to provide a 6 bedroom dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application sought alterations and extensions to provide a 6-bedroom dwelling. However, during the application process revised plans were submitted for a 5-bedroom dwelling. These plans were accepted by the Council and formed the basis of its decision. The description of the development on the Council's decision notice and the appeal form reflect this change and I have determined the appeal on the same basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on: i) the character and appearance of the area and; ii) the living conditions of 6 Birchwood Drive with particular regard to enclosure.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property also neighbours 4 and 6 Birchwood Drive with their rear gardens forming the side boundary. These dwellings are a pair of semi-detached bungalows and are set at a slightly higher level than the appeal dwelling.
5. The Chenies is a cul-de-sac characterised by detached and semi-detached bungalows. The low sloping dual pitched roofs gives the street scene a strong sense of rhythm and uniformity. No 2 is a detached bungalow which has already been extended to the side and rear. In addition, the insertion of a rear dormer has provided accommodation in the roof space.

6. The appeal proposal seeks to raise the height of the roof to create additional living space at first floor level. The creation of an additional storey would change its appearance considerably from that of a bungalow to a two-storey house when viewed from the street.
7. Whilst I saw from my site visit that No 4 The Chenies appears to have a higher roof height than the appeal dwelling I find that the increased height and bulk would be at odds with the adjacent dwellings. The introduction of a new eaves would not align with the common eaves line along the street. There are no windows at first floor along The Chenies, only roof lights. Therefore, introducing windows at first floor would be out of character with the street scene. Consequently, the proposals would appear unduly dominant within the street scene comprised entirely of bungalows.
8. I note that the proposal would be built with the same materials to the existing dwelling. However, I do not find that these matters would outweigh the harm identified.
9. The proposal would conflict with policies DP2 and DP7 of the adopted Dartford Local Plan (2017) which together seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development should relate to the neighbouring buildings as well as the wider locality.

Living conditions

10. I saw from my site visit that No 6 has a relatively short rear garden which sits at a lower level than the dwelling. It also occupies a relatively wide corner plot and therefore it enjoys a relatively open aspect. I find that whilst the increase in height of the proposal would be relatively modest, the first-floor rear extension would be far bulkier. The side elevation would change considerably and would appear as a large blank elevation and would extend to a large proportion of the garden of No 6. Given its close proximity to the boundary I find it would be unduly overbearing and create a sense of enclosure.
11. The proposal conflicts with Policy DP5 and DP7 of the Local Plan which together, amongst other things, seek to protect the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

12. The appellant has drawn my attention to other developments in the area along Birchwood Drive and The Chenies. The proposals in each circumstance are likely to have been different and, in any event, the fact that similar developments have been granted planning permissions is not, on its own, reasons to allow unacceptable development.

Conclusion

13. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Neil Smith

INSPECTOR