
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 24 September 2019

by S Dean MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th October 2019

Appeal A Ref: APP/D5120/D/19/3232933

56 Farnham Road, Welling DA16 1LQ

- 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 J Bhandari against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 19/00690/FUL, dated 19 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 29 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is a part one/part two storey front, side and rear extension, alterations to roofline incorporating hip to gable end and rear dormer extension to provide room in roof space.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/D5120/D/19/3232934

56 Farnham Road, Welling DA16 1LQ

- 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 J Bhandari against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 19/00826/FUL, dated 25 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 12 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a part one/part two storey front, side and rear extension, alterations to roofline incorporating hip to gable end and rear dormer extension with juliet balcony to provide room in roof space.
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Decisions

1. Both appeals are dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. In the heading above, I have used the descriptions of development given on the Council's decision notices, which accurately describe the proposals.
3. As set out above there are two appeals on this site which differ in regard to the width and form of the hip to gable extension, with associated differences to the fenestration. Appeal A proposes a hip-to-gable extension and rear box-dormer over the width of the original property. It also proposes a less than full height hipped-roof over the two-storey side extension. Appeal B proposes a hip-to-gable extension across both the original property and the two-storey side extension with a full-width rear box-dormer. It also includes a Juliet balcony to the rear.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in both appeals is the effect of the proposal on the character of the property.

Reasons

5. Both the Council and the appellant have referred to a previous approval for an extension at this property which is under construction. It is clear from the decision notices, officer reports and statements of the appellant that the principle of extending the property is not at issue. The Council have also confirmed that they have no objections to the three roof-lights to the front elevation shown in both proposed schemes. It is only the form of the roof proposed in each scheme which is at issue between them.
6. The houses on Farnham Road are largely semi-detached and have been variously altered over time, with a variety of heights, forms and finishing materials to extensions and alterations. Nevertheless, the original design and style of the houses remains clear to see, and the majority of extensions are set-down, or set-back from the original dwelling, maintaining the legibility of the original dwelling and roof-form. Generally, even where an extension does not have a set-down ridge-line, the roof is still hipped. This maintains a consistency of character and appearance to the dwellings in the street and the area.
7. The roof-form proposed in Appeal A would be incongruous and would unbalance the appearance of the property. The hip-to-gable extension would appear uncharacteristically bulky, without a hipped roof to reduce apparent mass and scale. The small hipped roof proposed over the side extension would not address these concerns, as the roof would appear awkward, incongruous and somewhat over-complicated in comparison to most other alterations in the area. I note that there is an extension to a property on Elsa Road which is very similar to Appeal A. However, it does not change my conclusions as to the harmful effect of this proposal on the character and appearance of the property, nor does it create an irresistible precedent to find in favour of a development that would otherwise cause harm.
8. The roof-form proposed in Appeal B would also be incongruous, with the full-height roof stretching across the full-width of both the original property and the extension. The property would therefore appear inappropriately wide and bulky and would be unbalanced by the proposal.
9. Whilst I acknowledge that there are examples of hip-to-gable extensions in Farnham Road and the streets surrounding it, they do not, in themselves lend support to the appeal proposals before me. In each case that I saw, the hip-to-gable extensions appeared unbalanced and awkward in relation to the attached neighbour and other properties surrounding it.
10. The rear dormers in both appeals would harm the character of the property by increasing its apparent size and bulk. This would be heightened by the lack of a discernible roof-slope which would lessen the appearance of a third-storey. The differences between Appeal A and Appeal B in this regard do not alter my conclusions.

11. Both proposals would therefore be harmful to the character of the property, contrary to adopted Policy ENV39 of the 2004 Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan, adopted Policy CS07 of the Bexley Core Strategy, Guideline 2 of the Unitary Development Plan Design and Development Control Guidelines, and the National Planning Policy Framework. These policies and guidance seek to protect and enhance the quality of the built environment, ensure high standards of design sympathetic to the character of existing buildings and achieve well designed places.

Other Matters

12. The appellant suggests that the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh any limited harm. Any benefits which arise from the proposal are private, rather than public, and I have found significant harm to the character of the property and conflict between the proposals and the development plan.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

S Dean

INSPECTOR