
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by Paul Thompson DipTRP MAUD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/19/3238659

30 The Drive, Orpington BR6 9AP

- 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 & Mrs Tootill against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/19/02545/FULL6, dated 11 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with two rooflights to front roof slope and rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Procedural Guide Planning Appeals – England states that *only the person who made the planning application can make an appeal*. In this case, the appeal was lodged by Mr Gary Tootill. The applicant's agent subsequently provided clarification in writing that this was an oversight and the names should be the same on the Appeal Form. Nevertheless, as the appeal cannot technically be transferred to another person, it must continue in the original name of the applicants. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.
3. Despite the description of development set out above, I consider the description found on the Decision Notice and the Appeal Form better reflects the scheme that is before me and that which the Council considered. The development proposed is therefore for a 'loft conversion with rear dormer, front rooflights, increase in ridge height and removal of chimney.' I have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing house and the street scene.

Reasons

5. The residential area within which the site is situated is formed of detached houses and bungalows of a varied scale and appearance, including roof forms. Land levels in the area rise to the north and west so the properties to the northern side of The Drive are predominantly elevated above the street.

6. The appeal property is a detached two-storey house, the existing roof profile of which incorporates a number of hipped elements. From the front and sides, single roof slopes are visible but from the rear the roof is split, with two independent hipped roofs forming a central valley. The eaves line sits just above the first-floor windows. The property is visible above No 28, which is a bungalow, and due to a bend in the street it is set forward of No 32.
7. Taken together, these features make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the existing house and the wider street scene.
8. The proposal would raise the eaves line and façades of the property to provide additional accommodation within the roof space, brickwork within the façades would therefore increase above the first-floor windows. The resultant increase in the height of the house would have a top-heavy appearance that would unbalance the façades and result in an uncomfortable relationship between the eaves and windows beneath. Given the prominent position of the appeal property within the street, the proposal would be particularly conspicuous and appear as an incongruous addition to the property and the wider street.
9. The proposal would replace the individual hipped elements of the roof with a single crown roof. As there is some variety to roof forms in the surrounding area, the design of the proposed roof would not, in itself, be visually harmful. Furthermore, I have been referred to the relationship between Nos 22 and 24, a further bungalow and two-storey house to the east. The proposal would not appear dominant in relation to No 28, particularly as the difference in scale between the two properties would be comparable to the abovementioned properties. Nonetheless, the absence of harm in these matters would not outweigh my concerns regarding the increase in the height of the house to accommodate the new roof form, particularly in relation to its façades.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing house and the street scene. Hence, the proposal would not accord with Policies 6 and 37 of the London Borough of Bromley Local Plan (Adopted January 2019), Policy 7.4 of The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011, Adopted March 2016) and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Nos 1 and 2 (both dated July 2003).
11. Together these policies and guidance expect extensions to existing buildings to be of a high standard of design, layout and architectural quality. In particular, the scale and form of residential extensions should respect or complement the host dwelling and be compatible with development in the surrounding area, including by positively contributing to the existing street scene. Similarly, roof alterations should be carefully considered to ensure that they respect the form and appearance of the existing roof.

Other Matters

12. I note that the Council did not raise any concerns with regard to the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Be that as it may, the absence of harm in this matter would weigh neither for nor against the scheme.
13. The proposal also includes two roof lights to the front roof slope and a dormer window to the rear roof slope. These would not be prominent and would be

positioned in an appropriate manner within the roof slope, I therefore find no harm in respect of these elements of the proposal and note that the Council raised no objection in regard to these elements either. However, as the proposed roof lights and dormer would not be physically severable or capable of being built without the other alterations to the roof of the house, they would not be functionally severable. Moreover, they could not be used for their intended purpose without the roof alterations. In light of this, a split decision would not be a logical outcome.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Thompson

INSPECTOR