



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020 by Elizabeth Davies BSc (Hons) PIEMA

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A2280/D/19/3242842

23 Polhill Drive, Chatham, Kent ME5 9PN

- 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 G Singh against the decision of Medway Council.
 - The application Ref MC/19/2383 dated 6 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is construction of a first floor side extension and a single storey front infill extension together with a pitched roof to existing front projections.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. I have taken the wording used on the appeal forms and the Council's decision in the above header, as it more accurately describes the proposal than that on the application form.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, street scene and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a two storey dwelling, located on a bend, on a steeply sloping section of Polhill Drive. It is positioned at the end of a short terrace of three dwellings that are staggered in height down the hill. The properties corner position means that it is highly visible when travelling in both directions along Polhill Drive.
6. The local area is residential and is typically characterised by two storey detached and short terraces of dwellings. Although some properties have been extended, including the appeal property which features a large ground floor side extension, and some design features and materials differ between the

- groups of properties, the majority feature gabled flank elevations which helps to unify their appearance.
7. The proposed development includes a single storey front infill extension together with a pitched roof to existing front extensions. The Council raise no concerns in respect of these elements of the development. I have no reason to consider otherwise.
 8. The proposed first floor extension would substantially increase the size of the dwelling at first floor and the additional bulk and mass would be out of keeping with the scale of the existing house. Views looking up the hill would be dominated by the proposed first floor extension, the elevated position of the property would make the extension appear even larger, compounding its imposing and prominent nature.
 9. I appreciate that the roof of the first floor extension has been designed based on the configuration of the existing side extension. However, the proposed shape and style of the hip roof incorporating a gable would appear odd and at an awkward juxtaposition with the existing roof, resulting in the appeal property appearing out of keeping with the majority of other residential dwellings in the area. As a result, while it would replace a flat roof, it would nonetheless appear obtrusive in the streetscene.
 10. Whilst the appellant has drawn my attention to an example of a hipped roof first floor extension at No 33 Polhill Drive (No 33), this example is of a front extension and given the position of the appeal property on the corner it would be more prominent and noticeable compared to No 33. It is therefore not comparable.
 11. With regard to the loss of the gap above the existing ground floor extension that would result from the first floor extension, the appellant has sought to provide some analysis of the change in views from a select number of vantage points along Polhill Drive. Whilst the appellant has concluded that the loss would be negligible or no impact would occur, I observed on my site visit that the gap at first floor level provides long distance views looking down the hill and of woodland beyond, providing an importance sense of openness between the dwellings. The first floor extension would obstruct the view in a manner that would be harmful and significantly reduce the sense of openness.
 12. For the reasons above, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, street scene and surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan (adopted May 2003) and the National Planning Policy Framework, which seek, amongst other things, to ensure development is appropriate in relation to the character and appearance of the environment in terms of scale, mass, proportion, layout and siting and respects visual amenity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Elizabeth Davies

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR