



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2020

by D Hilton-Brown BSc (Hons) CIEEM

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/W/20/3244199
192 Erith Road, Bexleyheath DA7 6HU

- 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 A Dhillon against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 19/00693/FUL, dated 19 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the rear existing garage and the erection of a single storey 2-bedroom self-contained dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council has amended the description of the proposed development to reflect the fact that the garage would not be demolished, but would undergo conversion with associated alterations into a 2-bedroom dwelling. This is referenced by both the appellant and the Council and I have therefore assessed the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The proposed development site is within the rear garden of No 192 Erith Road. This is a 4-bedroom semi-detached residential house situated on the corner of Erith Road and Lyndhurst Road. The surrounding area is predominately characterised by 2-storey semi-detached residential dwellings with tiled hipped roofs.
5. The proposed development would result in a flat roofed, single storey, residential property with frontage onto Lyndhurst Road. The existing building is clearly situated and designed as a detached garage which is ancillary and subordinate to No 192. Conversion to a residential unit would change this character and add a totally different and discordant housing type to an area characterised by 1930s 2-storey semi-detached properties.

6. I acknowledge that this proposal would have a similar size and appearance to the existing garage and that other garages were present in the area. However, no other flat roofed single storey residential properties were visible in this locality. Therefore, as a residential property, it would be out of keeping and incompatible with the surrounding dwellings.
7. Furthermore, this proposed development would have a completely different plot shape and size to the other properties within the streetscape of Lyndhurst Road. This would lead to a house frontage that would not be in proportion to the uniformity of most of the other residential dwellings on this street.
8. The frontage of this proposed dwelling would be enclosed by a brick wall and gate of approximately 2m in height. While this would provide partial screening of the structure, it would be incongruous for a residential property in this streetscene. The majority of the properties in this locality are characterised by reasonably open frontages.
9. I am aware that street trees would partially screen the proposed development. Nonetheless, these would be seasonal and would fail to provide adequate screening in the winter months. Additionally, they would do little to reduce views of the development when traveling west along the road towards the junction with Erith Road.
10. The appellant has made reference to the garages at both No 192 and No 194 Erith Road signalling the start of the semi-detached houses. However, it is evident that the residential properties start on the corner of Erith Road and Lyndhurst Road. It is also clear that these structures are within the rear gardens of the corner properties on Erith Road and represent vehicular storage as opposed to residential dwellings within this existing streetscene.
11. The appellant has referenced that the development complies with amenity space standards. However, I can give this little weight, as this was not one of the reasons for refusal given by the Council in this appeal. From my site visit and evidence before me I concur with the Council's judgement in relation to amenity space.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would fail to accord with policies ENV39, H3 and H8 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (2004) and policies CS01 and CS02 of the Local Development Framework Development Plan Document, Bexley Core Strategy (2012). Together these require residential development to be compatible with the local character of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons detailed above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hilton-Brown

INSPECTOR