

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/20/3253816

33 Greenways, Beckenham BR3 3NQ

- 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 Novica Jevric against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/20/00429/FULL6, dated 29 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension with half hip end roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling in a residential road, which includes a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings. The appeal property has previously been extended through the addition of a hip to gable roof extension and a rear dormer extension. The current proposal seeks to extend the roof and first floor further so that they would project across the property's full width. The proposal includes a half-hip barn style roof.
4. My attention is drawn to two recent appeal decisions involving development proposals at the appeal property¹. Both appeals appear to include a similar form of first floor and roof extension as proposed in this current appeal. Consequently, I have had regard to these decisions given their relevance to the current proposal.
5. Policy 6 of the Council's Local Plan concerns residential extensions and, amongst other criteria, requires that space or gaps between buildings should be respected or maintained where these contribute to the character of the area. Policy 37 of the same plan requires, amongst other matters, that development should positively contribute to the existing street scene. The Council's decision

¹ APP/G5180/D/16/3157364, dated 24 October 2016 and APP/G5180/D/17/3179943, dated 19 October 2017.

notice refers also to Supplementary Planning Guidance 1 and 2. However, the versions that have been provided are dated July 2003 and supplement policies in the former Unitary Development Plan rather than the adopted Local Plan. As such, I have not had regard to this guidance for the purposes of determining this appeal.

6. Greenways and neighbouring streets include varied designs of semi-detached and detached dwellings, but a common characteristic of these streets is a good degree of separation between dwellings and pairs of dwellings. This is particularly the case at first floor level where predominantly hipped roofs enable generous views between properties, giving a spacious and open aspect to the suburban setting.
7. A number of properties in Greenways and surrounding streets have extended upper storeys; the appellant draws attention to Nos 8 and 10 Uplands and No 5 Forest Ridge by way of comparison with the appeal proposal. However, while these dwellings have been extended across their full width they have fully hipped roofs. This retains a degree of separation with the neighbouring properties and openness, and helps to reduce the bulk of the roof profile.
8. In contrast, the appeal proposal has a more limited hipped roof, which would result in greater bulk, thereby upsetting the proportions of the appeal property and substantially infilling the space that exists to the side of No 33 and so reducing the gap with the neighbouring dwelling, No 31. This would reduce considerably the characteristic space between dwellings with consequential harm to the openness of the street scene.
9. The changes to the roof would also significantly alter the visual relationship between the pair of semi-detached dwellings. I agree in this regard with the Inspector in the most recent appeal. While the existing hip to gable extension has eroded the symmetry with No 35, I do not accept the appellant's argument that the additional extension proposed would help to redress the balance. The extension in this case, as found in the earlier appeal, would only succeed in exacerbating the existing unbalanced appearance of the appeal property with No 35 Greenways.
10. I have had regard to the appellant's contention that the proposed development accords with government intentions to enable greater flexibility to extend properties through permitted development rights. However, I am required to address the current proposal before me, which involves an application for planning permission and therefore I give this matter limited weight and it does not alter my overall conclusion.
11. Accordingly, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed development would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies 6 and 37 of the Local Plan, referred to above. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), particularly section twelve concerning good design.
12. In determining this appeal, I have had regard to representations made by interested parties.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that the proposed extension is intended to create additional living space. However, these personal circumstances do not overcome the permanent harm and policy conflict that I have found would result from the proposal. Similarly, the fact that the occupier of the adjoining dwelling has not objected to the proposal does not have a direct bearing on the conclusions in this case, which concern the effect on local character.
14. The appellant contends in support of the appeal that the proposal should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development included in the Framework. While I have had regard to this contention, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework the presumption applies where development accords with the development plan or where there are no relevant policies or relevant policies are out-of-date, none of which applies in this case for the reasons given above. Accordingly, I give this matter limited weight.
15. I have had regard also to the contention that the extension would be built to high environmental standards, which will have considerable benefits. While I acknowledge that this is an important consideration to which I give weight, I note also what paragraph 9 of the Framework says with regard to such considerations: planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. In this case, it has been found that the form of extension proposed would harmfully affect local character in conflict with the development plan. As such, these environmental considerations do not outweigh this permanent harm and do not alter the overall conclusion.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR