

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: 14 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/20/3252389

33 White Oak Drive, Beckenham BR3 6QE

- 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 Robert Wyndham-Lewis against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/20/00737/FULL6, dated 21 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey front entrance porch and bedroom extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling in a residential cul-de-sac and is located within a wider area that is predominantly residential.
 4. Policy 6 of the Bromley Local Plan concerns residential extensions and, amongst other criteria, requires that the scale, form and materials of construction should respect or complement those of the host dwelling and be compatible with development in the surrounding area. Policy 37 of the same plan requires, amongst other matters, that development should positively contribute to the existing street scene.
 5. The appeal property and dwellings on the same side of White Oak Drive as No 33 have a consistent design and appearance. This comprises a regular two storey form with a dual pitched roof with gables to the sides and a front single storey projection across just under half the width of the dwelling. Nos 31 and 32 to the other side of the appeal property share the same design.
 6. Properties on the opposite side of the street are of similar regular form, but instead of the single storey element to the front have linked garages to the side between each dwelling. As such, these two designs of detached dwelling form distinctive and highly uniform groups that contribute positively to the character
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and appearance of the street scene, reflecting its original planned layout and design.

7. The proposed extension would be the same depth as the existing single storey element but would add an upper storey with a gable, which would be subordinate to the scale of the host dwelling. Despite this, the upward extension and forward-facing gable would introduce a wholly new design element into the street scene. Given the high degree of uniformity within White Oak Drive, the extension would appear as an incongruous and uncharacteristic feature that would upset the balance and uniformity that currently exists.
8. Properties are of brick construction with the upper storey clad with either horizontal boarding or tiles, giving a distinctive and largely uniform palette of materials along White Oak Drive. The proposed use of render would upset this consistency and would further draw attention to the uncharacteristic two storey gable to the front of the appeal property. Overall, therefore, the design and appearance of the extension would be out of keeping with the uniformity of the street scene that reflects the original planned design and layout of White Oak Drive.
9. The appellant refers to a number of other examples of successful development proposals, which it is contended, are precedents for the appeal proposal. I note, however, that two of these involve development in a different urban area, Orpington, and I have no evidence with regard to the nature of the surrounding area in each case. Another example, which was permitted on appeal, involves development in Bromley. However, while in that case the Inspector found that the front addition would stand forward of the existing building line and introduce a projecting gable, he also found that this is a characteristic feature of some nearby properties. That is not the case with the appeal proposal.
10. The other two examples are more relevant as they are situated further along White Oak Drive. However, from the plans and site inspection it is clear that neither instance involves such prominent changes as the appeal proposal. In both cases the changes to the front retain a single storey projection rather than create a two storey extension. As such, these other examples do not provide credible precedents for the current proposal and do not, therefore, alter the overall conclusion.
11. Accordingly, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the street scene. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan, referred to above. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), particularly section twelve concerning good design.

Other Matters

12. I acknowledge that the proposed extension is intended to create additional living space and I note the appellant's contention that the proposal will make effective use of land and provide multiple benefits, in accordance with the Framework. However, the Framework also requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character,

including the surrounding built environment¹. It has been found above that the proposal is in conflict with this requirement and with development plan policies that are consistent with it. As such, the matters raised do not overcome this policy conflict.

Conclusion

13. 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

¹ Paragraph 127c).