



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 29 September 2020 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/19/3242771

13 Old Farm Road East, Sidcup DA15 8AE

- 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 Mrs J Catton against the decision of London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 19/02190/FUL, dated 7 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

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

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a residential area. The property has a number of previous extensions, including a two-storey rear extension, a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. The proposal would convert the loft space to provide additional habitable accommodation and includes a rear dormer and two front rooflights. The Council have no objections to the proposed rooflights on the front elevation and I find no reason to disagree with this finding.
5. The proposed dormer would be located on the rear elevation and would not be visible from the public realm. However, the proposed dormer would be large in size, covering nearly all of the rear roof slope with a height which matches the ridge height of the host dwelling. Although it is noted that a lower ridge height may not provide sufficient internal ceiling height, the proposed size of the dormer would appear as an overly large and top heavy addition to the rear of the property in comparison to the modest size of the original dwelling, resulting in a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling. This would be exacerbated by the proposed windows which are large in size and do not match the size and traditional style of the existing windows, adding to the dominant appearance of the dormer and resulting in an overall development which is not subservient to the existing property.

6. The appellant has stated that there are other properties within the area which have built up to the ridge height. However, no particular examples were provided and no other examples of large dormer windows were observed during the site visit. Nevertheless, any precedent would not outweigh the significant harm found to the character and appearance of this property.
7. In conclusion, it has been found that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and would be contrary to Policies ENV39 and H9 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (2004) and Policy CS06 of the Bexley Core Strategy (2012). Although, these policies are not specific to loft conversions and dormers, they collectively seek to ensure all new residential development is of a high standard of design and layout, compatible with the character of the existing building and in keeping with the local character of the area. The proposal would also be contrary to the general design principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. The development would also fail to accord with the Design and Development Control Guidelines (2004) in that, although it would be set back from the eaves of the dwelling, it would, for the reasons given above, appear as an additional storey.

Other Matters

8. The appellant has stated that they amended the design of the proposal based on feedback from the Council and have been unable to speak with the Council since the refusal of the application, leading them to appeal the decision. Nevertheless, these are procedural issues which do not affect my consideration of the planning merits of the proposal.
9. Both the appellant and the Council agree that the proposal would not impact upon the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. However, this would not outweigh the harm found to the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Conclusions and Recommendation

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

Emma Worby

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR