



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 January 2021

by Mr Kim Bennett BSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/20/3261937

28 Darrick Wood Road, Orpington BR6 8AW

- 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 Emma Kelt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/20/01846/FULL6, dated 22 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is adding a first floor to an existing single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a detached house located on the northern side of a corner of Darrick Wood Road. It has a main hipped roof with a smaller hipped roof projection above a double bay front window. There is a flat roofed garage attached to its southern side whilst on the opposite side is a long flat roofed extension, set back from the front elevation and extending slightly beyond the main rear elevation of the property. It is irregular in shape, being significantly wider at the rear than the front, because it follows the boundary line with the adjoining property No 26 Darrick Wood Road.
4. The appellant argues that the extension would be sympathetically designed to fit in with the streetscene, and partly because of its set back and position within the road, it would not be prominent within the wider area. Matching materials in the form of a rendered finish would also be used to complement the rendered walls of the main house.
5. However, although the extension would be set back and be above the footprint of the existing extension, it would be clearly visible in the streetscene as one travelled up this part of Darrick Wood Road in a westerly direction, and the full extent of the flat roof would be apparent because of the skewed boundary with No 26 and the widening gap between the two properties towards the rear.

From that view point I agree with the Council that the large flat roof would be at odds with the design of the existing property and would result in an incongruous addition which would relate poorly to the attractive hipped roof character of the host dwelling. I do not consider those concerns could be overcome simply with matching external materials and brick detailing. In my view the development would cause visual harm to the streetscene.

6. I have been referred to a number of other examples of flat roof extensions within the immediate area and I took the opportunity to view those at my site visit. In that respect I noted that some of the examples were on properties of different architectural styles and with alternative roof shapes which raise different design considerations. However, in respect of the existing flat roofed extension on the adjoining property at No 26, it seems to me that indicates precisely the harm that would occur in this instance of an extension which relates poorly to the character of the main dwelling. I note that the Council says it has no record of an approval for that extension, but in any event it pre dates current up to date design policies in the Council's Local Plan, which seek to secure more sensitive designs for extensions to properties than might hitherto have been the case. For these reasons I do not regard them being suitable precedents to follow. Conversely, I noted that there were a number of examples where extensions had been designed to complement the main dwelling, including directly opposite the appeal site. Notwithstanding these points, I have in any event reached my findings above on the site circumstances of this particular case.
7. I acknowledge the additional cost of providing a pitched roof and that the accommodation is intended to be for a vulnerable person. However, whilst I am sympathetic to those issues, personal circumstances change over time whereas built development does not, and in this instance I have afforded greater weight to the visual harm that would occur. I also note that there have been no local objections to the proposal, but that fact alone does not warrant a development being approved which would be unacceptable from a design point of view.
8. I note that the Council raised no objections from an amenity point of view, and having considered those issues at my site visit I see no reason to disagree.
9. Finally, the appellant suggests a possible alternative to the front roof form of the proposed extension in the grounds of appeal. However, I have to make my decision based on the submitted plans in front of me. Any alternative roof form would need to be discussed with the Council in the first instance.
10. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore be in conflict with Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019 in that it would not be a high standard of design and would not complement or respect the form of the host dwelling. Although I note that the appellant suggests that the Council did not find conflict with Policy 37, that was in respect of amenity issues only, whereas there are several criteria to Policy 37, some of which also relate to design considerations. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR