



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2021

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/20/3251218

7 Birtrick Drive, Meopham, Gravesend DA13 0LR

- 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 Debbie Hamza against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20191264, dated 2 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 29 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Removal of the existing Garage. Erection of Double Storey side extension to form open car port, Ground Floor, Study and Shower-room. First Floor, larger Bedroom and additional Bedroom with En-Suite Shower room'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are: the effect of the development on the character and appearance of 7 Birtrick Drive (No 7) and the streetscene of Birtrick Drive; and whether the development would make adequate provision for car parking.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. No 7 is a semi-detached house within a part of Birtrick Drive that comprises a mixture of semi-detached houses and bungalows. The development would involve the erection of a two storey side and part rear extension, which would have a mono-pitched roof to the front and a fully hipped roof to the rear.
4. The extension's mono-pitched roof would be a unique roof form for this part of Birtrick Drive, where notwithstanding the extensions at Nos 2, 3 and 6, simple gable ended roofs are the predominant roof type. I consider that the mono-pitched roof would have an incongruous appearance which would be readily apparent within this cul-de-sac. I consider that the partial reliance on the use of a mono-pitched roof would be indicative of this extension being of a disproportionate scale. In that regard I am of the view that the limited setting back of the extension's front elevation and setting down of its roof line would do little to give this addition a subservient appearance. I also consider that the incongruity of the extension's appearance from the street would be accentuated by the minimal offsetting from the boundary shared by Nos 6 and 7.

5. While the rear hipped roof would be uncharacteristic of this part of Birtrick Drive, it would be discretely located and I consider this element of the development would not be detrimental to No 7's appearance.
6. I mindful of the fact that No 6 has a two storey flat roofed side extension. However, I do not know the circumstances that gave rise to the construction of No 6's extension and I have therefore considered the appeal development on its individual merits, as I am required to do in any event.
7. I conclude that the extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of No 7 and the streetscene of Birtrick Drive. I therefore consider that this development would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy of 2014 (the Core Strategy). That is because this development would not be visually attractive and would fail to integrate well with its surroundings, with its design being disrespectful of the streetscene. I also consider that the proposed extension would not accord with the provisions of section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework, most particularly paragraph 127. That is because the extension would not add to the overall quality of the area, with the design for this addition being visually unattractive.

Parking

8. Currently the off-street parking for No 7 comprises a single garage, sited behind the house and a driveway capable of accommodating at least two cars. The ground floor of the extension would comprise a car port and there would therefore be two off-street parking spaces available to serve what would become a four bedroomed house, albeit the car port space would be of a restricted width.
9. The Council has adopted the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards of 2006 as supplementary planning guidance. For dwellings of four bedrooms (or larger) the parking standards require the provision of three parking spaces at a maximum. There would therefore be a shortfall of one space against the requirements of the standards. Birtrick Drive, St John's Road and other nearby streets are subject to single yellow line no waiting restrictions, which given the proximity of Meopham railway station I presume are designed to deter day-time commuter parking¹.
10. At the time of my middle of the day site visit there was some on-street parking taking place. However, that parking did not appear to be unduly affecting the operation of the public highway or inconveniencing the occupiers of Birtrick Drive. I therefore consider that any additional parking demand arising from the extension's occupation would not give rise to on-street parking that would adversely affect the operation of the public highway or the living conditions for Birtrick Drive's occupiers.
11. I therefore conclude that the development would not give rise to an inadequacy in parking provision and that there would be no conflict with Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy and saved Policy P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review of 1994. That is because there would be sufficient parking to meet the needs the occupiers of No 7.

¹ The no-waiting signs on Wrotham Road indicating that the restrictions apply between 08.00 to 18.30 hours Mondays to Saturdays inclusive.

Conclusions

12. While the development would not give rise to an unacceptable parking affect, I consider that the extension's effect on the character and appearance of No 7 and the streetscene would be unacceptable. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Grahame Gould

INSPECTOR