
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2021

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/21/3269822

79 Howard Avenue, Bexley, DA5 3BA

- 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 C and J Greatbatch against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 20/02553/FUL, dated 5 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and ground floor rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of two storey side and ground floor rear extensions at 79 Howard Avenue, Bexley, DA5 3BA, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/02553/FUL, dated 5 October 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: BL/DRG/200820/01, BL/DRG/200820/02, BL/DRG/190820/03A, BL/DRG/190820/04A, BL/DRG/200820/05A and BL/DRG/200820/06A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. 79 Howard Avenue is a two storey house at one end of a terrace of four houses. There is a range of house types along the street, but it is of a style similar to many others nearby, with a projecting front bay and gable, and a hipped roof. The majority of the houses along the street have been extended in some way.
4. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed rear single storey extension and I see no reason to disagree with that view.
5. The policies relevant in this case include policy CS01 of the Bexley Core Strategy 2012 (the Core Strategy) and saved policies H9 and ENV39 of the London Borough of Bexley UDP 2004 (the UDP). These seek, among other things, to ensure that development, including residential extensions, is compatible with the character of the surroundings, in terms of matters such as siting, design, scale and massing. The Council's *Design*

and Development Control Guidelines 2004 (the Design Guidelines) contains detailed guidance for house extensions in respect of the impact of the massing, proportions, roof type and proximity to boundaries, among other things. Extensions should be subordinate to the existing building and respect its character and that of adjacent buildings. The recently updated National Planning Policy Framework 2021 carries forward the emphasis on design quality from the 2019 version.

6. The proposed two storey extension would fill the gap between the side elevation and the boundary with No. 81 for the full depth of the existing house. It would extend the roof to a gable end, with a small step down from the main ridge and would be set back from the main front elevation at first floor level by approximately 0.2m.
7. I consider that although these dimensions are relatively small, they would result in a visual break with the main part of the house, so that the extension would appear subordinate. It would be less than 3m wide and in the context of the house itself and the terrace as a whole, it would appear as a modest addition to the built form. The roof would reflect the pitch of the front and rear pitches on the terrace, but the side hip would be lost. I note that the Council has issued a Certificate of Lawfulness for alterations to the roof from hip to gable and for a large rear dormer window and the appellant would therefore be able to alter the roof in that manner, regardless of the outcome of this appeal.
8. Many of the houses along the street have been extended and otherwise altered, not all of them successfully in design terms. This has resulted in a considerable change in the character of the area. There are similar extensions to this proposal nearby. I consider it would not be out of scale with the existing house. Its design and external appearance would respect the character of the house and the rest of the terrace. The existing house is small and the proposal would result in an improvement in the level of accommodation to provide a family home which would still be modest in its proportions.
9. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the existing house or the wider street scene and that it is consistent with Core Strategy policy CS01, UDP policies H9 and ENV39 and the Design Guidelines.
10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

11. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to the materials is necessary in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR