
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2021

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/T2215/W/20/3264724

4 St Vincents Villas, Temple Hill, Dartford DA1 5HT

- 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 R Coleman against the decision of Dartford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DA/20/00326/FUL, dated 9 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is for the demolition of the existing side extension and the erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension to create an attached dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 20 July 2021. Whilst I have had regard to the revisions, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the changes to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on (a) the character and appearance of the area; (b) the living conditions of the occupants of no. 6 St Vincents Villas in respect of loss of light and overbearing impact; and (c) parking provision.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site relates to a two-storey, semi-detached property on Temple Hill, with vehicular parking to the east of the site accessed from Knights Manor Way. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature and a short walk from Dartford Town Centre, with its array of facilities and services including shops and a railway station.

5. The proposal would result in the construction of an attached dwelling. Whilst the scheme would have a similar height and depth to the host building, the development would be significantly narrower in width than the host dwelling and other properties within the immediate row.
6. I consider that the development would therefore fail to visually connect with the overall appearance of the existing dwelling and other local residences. It would be built immediately adjacent to the side boundary with no. 6 St Vincents Villas, severely eroding the sense of spaciousness between built form. The rear dormer windows are slightly offset from the fenestration in the first floor below, which to my mind would result in a jarring appearance. In general, the scheme would appear discordant and incongruous within the context of the local streetscene.
7. In order to provide private amenity space for the original house and the new unit the existing rear garden area would be subdivided. The size of the proposed site would be very limited and out of character with the surrounding area. Overall, to my mind the narrow scale of the house and the small rear garden would result in a cramped form of development.
8. I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would fail to accord with policies CS1 and CS10 of the Dartford Core Strategy September 2011, policies DP6, DP7 and DP8 of the Dartford Development Policies Plan July 2017 (DPP), and the Housing Windfall Supplementary Planning Document October 2014. Collectively these policies seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance.

Living conditions

9. The proposal incorporates a two-storey side element that would project outwards by approximately 4.5 metres from the flank wall of the main house and with its side elevation lying on the boundary with no. 6 St Vincents Villas.
10. Although it lies on lower ground than the adjacent house, the development would be substantially higher than the existing boundary fence. Taken together with the close proximity relative to the adjoining property, I consider that it would result in harm to the living conditions of no. 6 St Vincents Villas. It would appear oppressive and overbearing when viewed from the neighbour's facing window in the first floor side wall of the main house, and result in a loss of sunlight and daylight to this opening.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupants of no. 6 St Vincents Villas with regard to loss of light and overbearing impact. It would be contrary to policies DP5 and DP7 of the DPP which require new development to protect the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Parking provision

12. The appeal proposal would not provide an additional off-street parking spaces for the existing or proposed units. I observed during my site visit that the area is a dense residential environment with high levels of on-street parking. Nevertheless, at the time of my visit at Thursday lunchtime, many on-street parking spaces were available close to the appeal site in and around Knights Manor Way. Whilst I accept this is only a snap shot in time, it is an indication that on-street parking is not difficult to achieve at certain times of day. I also

note that there are no restrictions by way of permits, time limits or a pay and display regime.

13. Based upon the evidence before me and my observations, I do not consider that the area suffers from undue parking stress and the scheme would be acceptable in this respect. There is sufficient on-street parking capacity to accommodate the demand arising from the development, without significantly worsening the existing parking situation close to the site and in surrounding streets. I also note that the site is in an accessible area in close proximity to Dartford Town Centre and public transport modes.
14. I therefore conclude that there would be no undue detriment with regard to parking provision. It would meet policies DP3, DP4 and DP5 of the DPP in respect of traffic generation and environmental protection.

Other Matters

15. I acknowledge those matters that have been advanced in support of the development, including the construction of well-insulated, water-efficient additional housing and the absence of objections with regard to flooding or the layout of the internal accommodation. However, these arguments do not outweigh the harm to character and appearance that I have identified above.

Conclusion

16. Having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR