
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2022

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6TH July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/22/3291903

109 Cirrus Crescent, Gravesend, DA12 4QR

- 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 and Mrs Ronald Yearley against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20211197, dated 23 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front, side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

3. The area is characterised by two storey properties that are generally semi-detached or form short terraces. Houses are finished in brick and are commonly set back from the highway. Gaps between properties and a general absence of prominent built form close to street junctions and corners is a noticeable characteristic of the area.
4. The appeal property is an end of terrace, two-storey dwelling. This terrace fronts onto Cirrus Crescent but its set forward position and gap to No. 167 Marling Way, mean that the side elevation of the appeal property is highly visible from Marling Way. However, the dwelling is set back from the highway and so broadly conforms to the area's prevailing character and appearance.
5. The proposed development would be built of matching materials and be of single storey. It would comprise a rear extension, a side extension and front porch. However, by virtue of its wraparound design, the constituent parts of the proposal would combine to create an overly large extension which would substantially increase the depth of the building when viewed from Marling Way. As a result, the proposal would appear disproportionate and unsympathetic to the dwelling's appearance. Given the extension's prominence within the street scene, the character of the area would be unacceptably harmed.
6. The flat roof element would not be prominent and in and of itself would not be a reason to dismiss the appeal. Similarly, that the proposal extends to the site boundary would not mean that it would be out of keeping with the area.

However, these elements would form part of the overall composition of this proposal and thus contribute to the resulting scale and form of the building.

7. There are a number of altered dwellings within the street scene including the neighbour at 167 Marling Way. However, these generally read as subordinate additions and do not, based on what I have seen, harm the character and appearance of the street scene. This would not be the case with the appeal proposal.
8. I acknowledge that there are similar extensions to that proposed within the surrounding roads. However, little information is before me with regards to those extensions. Furthermore, the extensions highlighted do not represent justification for harmful development at the appeal site and each application must be determined on its individual merits.
9. Given that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area, I find that it would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure developments make a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area. The proposal would also be contrary to Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which amongst other things, seeks to ensure developments are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

10. The appellants refer to the Council's lack of communication during the planning application process. This is a matter to be taken up directly with the Council. I have focused solely on the planning merits of the scheme.
11. The appellants point to the absence of comment from neighbours or councillors on the proposed development. However, this in itself does not mean that the current scheme is acceptable and does not in any event absolve me from making an assessment as to its effects in regard to the main issue of the case.
12. The development is said to be modest in comparison to the overall size of the plot. However, it is the scale and form of the works in relation to the existing dwelling, rather than the size of the plot which is the main issue in this case.
13. The appellants have referred to the possibility of erecting flat roof extensions under permitted development, which they suggest could be unsightly and bulky. However, I have no details before me nor is there any indication that it is anything more than a theoretical possibility. Furthermore, a wraparound extension of the type proposed would not be permitted development and therefore any fall-back option would not be directly comparable to the appeal scheme. Accordingly, the weight I could attach to this matter would be limited.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area and would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR