
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2022

by R J Redford MTCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/22/3293222

35 Sidney Road, Beckenham BR3 4PX

- 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 Juan Stoppa against the decision of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/21/05291/FULL6, dated 4 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with rear L-shaped dormer, increased ridge height, floor plan redesign and all associated works.
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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 host dwelling and the Sidney Road and Kendal Road Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC).

Reasons

3. The ASRC is considered important due to the size of the dwellings and their original early Edwardian construction. The host dwelling is a typical example of these traditional, 2 storey, semi-detached properties.
4. The frontages of the Sidney Road properties are reasonably uniform with similar decorative features. The rears, however, are considerably less consistent with many extensions and alterations in evidence. From the Council's description of the ASRC, the frontages of the properties are what give the area its special character. One of the more obvious elements of these properties is the linear build line along Sidney Road, emphasised by the uniformity of ridge heights, as well as the regular pattern created by the parapeted gables and party walls.
5. The proposal would increase the height of the ridge to accommodate the rear dormer. To do this would set the ridge further back and increase the height of the parapet on both the gable and party wall. This part of the proposal would be visible from the front of the property. It would not only harm the appearance of the front elevation of the host dwelling by losing the central alignment of the roof ridge between the apex of the parapets, but also the symmetry of the parapet walls across the semi-detached pair. This would create an awkward pause in the regular pattern of roof forms along Sidney Road.

6. From the rear, the proposal would not be dissimilar to other extensions within the area, and when viewed from a distance would not look out of place in context with the existing and varied rear alterations and extensions on properties within the same row. The proposal would also not extend beyond the side elevation of the main part of the host dwelling, so would not harm the regular spacing between buildings which is part of the character of the area.
7. Policy 44 of the Bromley Local Plan (Local Plan) requires that development should respect, enhance, and strengthen the special and distinctive qualities of the ASRC. By disrupting the roofscape of Sidney Road the proposal does not achieve this.
8. It is noted that the appellant considers the ridge heights to vary along Sidney Road and has indicated 3 properties (Nos 30, 32 and 52) where similar alterations have taken place. The alterations to all 3 roof forms are visible from Sidney Road and in all cases constitute an exception to the roofscape. Nevertheless, they were approved under the previous development plan, so the circumstances of their approval are not directly comparable with the proposal before me.
9. The proposed development would, therefore, harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the ASRC. This would be contrary to Local Plan policies 6, 37 and 44 insofar as they relate to character and appearance and the protection of ASRCs.

Other Matters

10. The lack of harm to the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties and the appellants reasoning for needing the proposal are noted. However, a lack of harm, by definition, cannot outweigh harm found, and the appellant's private interests would be neutrally weighted. Consequently, these matters do not outweigh the harm identified in the main issue.

Conclusion

11. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan as a whole, for the reasons given above. There are no sufficiently weighted material considerations, including the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework, that would indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal should, therefore, be dismissed.

RJ Redford

INSPECTOR