

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 August 2022 by A Humphries BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Chris Forrett BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/22/3297287

127 Gates Green Road, West Wickham, BR4 9DF

- 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 Jane Blockley against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/21/03160/FULL6, dated 21 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion with side dormer, rooflights, rear Juliet balcony and elevational alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. There is a degree of variation between the description of development on the application form and that utilised by the Council on their decision notice. In this regard, I noted that the appellant had adopted the Council's description of development on the appeal form. Whilst I am satisfied that both descriptions are seeking to describe the development, the above description was taken from the Council's decision notice and appeal form as it is more descriptive.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The host dwelling, which is a detached two-storey property that is connected by a garage to the adjacent dwelling, forms part of a group of similarly designed detached and semi-detached dwellings. These properties have steeply pitched hipped roofs with mock Tudor front gable walls. These features of the host and neighbouring dwellings within the group contribute to the prevailing character and appearance of the street scene.
6. The development would introduce a tiled clad side dormer to the roofscape which would be set below the ridge line and set back from the front elevation.

By virtue of its position and scale, the side dormer would detract and disrupt the uncomplicated roof line of the host dwelling. Whilst the host dwelling has an asymmetrical appearance, the side dormer would add a flat roof and significant bulk to the roofscape that would appear visually discordant and disproportionate in size to the host dwelling. The side dormer would therefore not be a subservient feature to the roofscape and would not be in harmony with the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

7. As a result of the above, and owing to the separation distances between dwellings, the side dormer would be a notable and visually prominent addition to the roofscape when viewed from the street. Given that there are no other dormer windows within the views of the host dwelling, the side dormer would therefore be a harmful departure from the prevailing character and appearance of the street scene.
8. In coming to the above view, I acknowledge the other developments drawn to my attention by the appellant including side roof dormers in the wider area. With the exception of the developments at 81 Gates Green Road and 2 Hartfield Road, details of the permissions relating to the side dormers have not been provided to me. However, from observations during the site visit and the evidence presented before me, these are either subservient to the dwellings or located within a different design context and setting. For these reasons, the cited examples do not represent the same circumstances to the context of the proposed development.
9. The appellant has also directed me towards other extensions and alterations within the similarly designed group of neighbouring dwellings on Gates Green Road. Whilst details of these permissions have not been provided, the evidence before me indicates that these relate to side extensions and solar roof panels. These are therefore distinctly different in nature and design from the side dormer and thus not deemed to be directly comparable. Moreover, each proposal must be considered on its individual merits.
10. The development also includes the alteration of the hipped roof at the rear to form a new gable wall, together with roof lights and a Juliet balcony. Whilst the Council has not raised any objections to these elements, I am conscious that concerns have been raised from the occupiers of neighbouring properties, in respect of the scale and proportions of the proposal. However, whilst the non-dormer window elements of the proposal would increase the mass and scale of the host dwelling, I consider that these elements would not give rise to any harm to the character and appearance of the area.
11. For the reasons above, the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene. The development would be contrary to Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan (2019). Collectively, these policies seek a high standard of design where the scale, proportion and form respect the host dwelling and adjacent buildings.

Other Matters

12. I have also had regard to the concerns raised in the representations relating to the proposals impact on outlook, privacy and the availability of light. Whilst I have taken these factors into account in my decision, none of these provide for a further reason to withhold planning permission.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. I sympathise with the appellant's desire to increase living space without increasing the footprint of the host dwelling. However, the scale and position of the side dormer would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. The development conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, that outweigh this conflict. I therefore recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

A Humphries

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Forrett

INSPECTOR