



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2023

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H2265/D/22/3302945

565 Maidstone Road, Blue Bell Hill, Chatham ME5 9QP

- 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 Jeff Barrow against the decision of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.
 - The application Ref TM/22/00577/FL, dated 11 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is for a two storey front extension over existing garage space with new full side dormers to loft area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey front extension over existing garage space with new full side dormers to loft area at 565 Maidstone Road, Blue Bell Hill, Chatham ME5 9QP in accordance with the terms of the application Ref TM/22/00577/FL, dated 11 March 2022, 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: 021-024/001A, 021-024/005B, 021-024/006B, 021-024/007B
 - 3) The external finishes of the development hereby permitted shall match in material and colour those of the existing dwelling.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site consists of a detached chalet bungalow with off-street parking to the front. It is set back from those houses to either side, and located within a row of other residential properties of differing size, design and detailing.
4. To my mind, the existing arrangement that sees the appeal building set behind its neighbours is somewhat anomalous within the context of the street scene. As such, I consider that the proposal to extend the property forward such that it would broadly match that of no.567 would be acceptable. Although the gaps

between built form to either flank would be reduced, such relationships exist elsewhere in the locality, and therefore the development would not appear unduly cramped or incongruous in this context.

5. The appeal scheme would also include the formation of large flat-roof dormer windows in the side roof slope of the dwelling. Despite their size, I observed that these elements would be screened in part by the mass and bulk of the upper floors of the larger houses to either side. I am also cognisant that the dormer windows would be set down from the main ridge line, above the eaves and positioned away from the side walls of the property to further reduce their presence. Consequently, the impact of the dormer features from the public domain would be limited.
6. The existing appeal dwelling dominates the private amenity spaces of the houses to either side, due to its positioning towards the rear of these adjacent properties. Within this context, I consider that the front extension and dormer windows would not adversely affect visual amenity from the surrounding back gardens above and beyond that currently experienced.
7. I find that the proposal would assimilate with the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the local area. It would accord with saved policy P4/12 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan 1998 and policy CP24 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Core Strategy September 2007, which seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance. It would also be consistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conditions

8. I have considered the imposition of conditions in light of advice in Planning Policy Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans are listed for certainty. A condition requiring external materials to match those on the existing dwelling would provide for a satisfactory appearance.

Conclusion

9. Given my reasoning and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR