



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 March 2023

By Terrence Kemmann-Lane JP DipTP FRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/23/3314544

2 Bunny Hill, Tanyard Hill, Shorne, Gravesend, DA12 3EP

- 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 Marc White against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20221007, dated 2 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension, roof alteration creating first floor, façade alterations, floor plan redesign and all associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is semi-detached, with a high level of symmetry with its attached neighbour, albeit that the neighbour has had a single storey side extension added (with a degree of setback). Thus the pair are viewed together, forming an attractive whole. In the general area, there is variations in layout and design, with large, wide fronted detached houses being common.
4. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) places considerable emphasis on good design. As paragraph 126 notes, *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities"*. In this connection, for the appellant paragraph 56 of the 2012 version of the Framework is quoted: *"The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people"*.
5. The Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (Design SPD) (2021) is a recent design guide which follows accepted principles in achieving satisfactory designs for extensions to dwellings and is in accordance with the policy of the Framework.

Paragraph 10.5 sets out a number of criteria governing first floor side extensions, which include:

- be set back behind the main front building line
 - avoid dominating the original property
 - be no greater than half the width of the host
 - have a minimum gap of 1 metre between the extension and the flank boundary
 - be subservient to the main property roof
6. The appellant's appeal statement addresses the criteria, as follows: the proposed siting of the front elevation is set back from the front elevation of the host dwelling; the proposed extension would not exceed the eaves height of the host dwelling; the width of the proposal would maintain side space between the proposed elevation and the site boundary, adhering to the one metre requirement; the proposed roof height would be lower than the host ridge and set back from the host roof pitch, whilst also creating a hipped end profile; and the proposed roof profile would not detract from the host dwelling or its setting as a pair of semi-detached dwellings, as the existing dwellings are unsymmetrical in terms of footprint, profile and spatial arrangement.
7. Taking these points in turn, the front elevation is set back 0.4m, to match the set back of the neighbour's side extension. That extension, as I have already noted, is single-storey. Since it is single storey, it is seen as being a subservient extension without any substantial setback. In terms of the appeal proposal, the set back of 0.4m is insufficient to achieve the desired effect. The width of the extension, its eaves height and the gap to the flank boundary meet the guidance, but the roof presents 2 issues.
8. The first is that the main roof is enlarged to a considerable extent, by extending the flank wall of the existing garage up to the main eaves height and carrying the ridge across to an extended hip. This provides a much-extended main roof. In addition, the 2-storey further extension, which includes the new garage element, has the front plane of the hipped roof just marginally set back, with a lower ridge about 0.3m below the main roof. The result is a much enlarged roof, part of which does not seek to differentiate itself from the existing mass of the house, and part that has a minor set-back in the front elevation and a minor drop-down of the ridge.
9. The result is a 2-storey extension that adds considerable bulk to the existing house, attempting to demonstrate part subservience, with the differentiation being too small to be effective. At the same time, the proposal loses the current attractive symmetry of the existing pair of houses, which in turn adds emphasis to the unsatisfactory design of the extension. For these reasons I consider that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its neighbour and the surrounding area. I will therefore dismiss the appeal.

Terrence Kemmann-Lane

INSPECTOR