



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2023

by D Wilson BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3315264

19 Sussex Road, Bromley, Orpington BR5 4JF

- 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 William Fox against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/22/04111/FULL6, dated 19 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. 19 Sussex Road (No.19) is a semi-detached bungalow located on a corner plot. Sussex Road is characterised by semi-detached bungalows of a similar design and style to No.19, which gives the area a sense of symmetry. The appeal site and the surrounding area is not the subject of any specific design designations.
4. Many of the bungalows are unaltered though there are some exceptions that have had dormer and other extensions; however, this is infrequent and does not take away the sense of symmetry.
5. The dwellings on Sussex Road have predominantly open frontages, with either gardens or car parking spaces that gives the area an open character and appearance. No.19 and the other dwellings located on corner plots have gaps between the road and dwelling, with side gardens or parking which provides a degree of uniformity and openness to the entrance to Sussex Road, particularly when viewed from Northfield Avenue. As such, the open space to the side of No.19 makes a particularly positive contribution to the open character and appearance of the area.
6. The proposal would introduce built form into the open space to the side of the host dwelling which would immediately abut the pavement. This would erode the open character and appearance of the area, in particular due to the prominent location of the corner plot which is visible upon entering Sussex Road.

7. The removal of this open space to the side of No.19 and its replacement with built form immediately adjacent to the pavement would also increase the bulk of the host dwelling. Whilst less than a 50% overall increase in width, this additional bulk, combined with the width of the extension, would result in the host dwelling being prominent and overly dominant and intrusive. This, combined with the removal of the open space would give a cramped appearance to the plot, especially in the context of the neighbouring dwellings on corner plots which have maintained open space to the side.
8. I note that the nearest property frontage is some distance away and frontages of other dwellings tend to be closer to each other and that the front and rear gardens will be retained. However, this does not mitigate the impact of the loss of the particularly important open space to the side of the host dwelling, nor the cramped nature of the host dwelling being immediately adjacent to the pavement.
9. Consequently, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. It would be contrary to policies 6 and 37 of the London Borough of Bromley Local Plan (January 2019) which amongst other things, seeks to ensure that the scale and form of construction should respect or complement the host dwelling and be compatible with development in the surrounding area, maintain space or gaps between buildings where these contribute to the character of the area and positively contribute to the street scene. The appellant has drawn my attention to various paragraphs in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) including those relating to design. However, for the reasons stated above, the proposal is similarly contrary to relevant paragraphs of the Framework.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has referred to a number of other developments in the area in order to support the proposal. I do not have full details in respect of such developments so I cannot be sure of the circumstances of these. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits, based on the evidence before me.
11. Notwithstanding the above, from site observations I noted that whilst 22 Sussex Road is located in a similar corner position and the side extension would be similar to the proposal, it mirrors the dwelling on the opposite side the road, which therefore provides a corridor to the dwellings on Heath Close and creates a degree of separation to Sussex Road.
12. In respect of 10 Sussex Road, the position of the dwelling is different to the proposal and the side extension is not immediately adjacent to the pavement. Furthermore, the plot is much larger and allows for open space to be maintained to the side which contributes to the open character and appearance of the area.
13. Regarding No's 1 and 8 Heath Close, whilst adjacent to Sussex Road these dwellings have different frontages, where the gable ends predominantly face the road. Furthermore, the dwellings are not so close together and have larger open frontages compared to those on Sussex Road so even with the extensions to the side, the open character and appearance is maintained.

14. In respect of 20 Chelsfield Road, the character and appearance of this road differs from the appeal site, dwelling styles vary along the road and there is leafy character and appearance which, as a result of the existing landscaping, is maintained.
15. The dwelling at 2 Sussex Road has been altered with front and side dormers, however the appeal proposal does not include dormer extensions and as such is distinctly different. In any case, it is not located on a corner plot and existing landscaping provides some screening to soften the impact. I therefore attach limited weight to these other examples.
16. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment that: materials and design would match the host dwelling, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings or that any amenity space would be lost, however these matters are not benefits of the proposal and do not outweigh the harm identified.
17. The appellant has suggested that works to increase the size of the dwelling could be carried out under permitted development. Whilst this may be the case, I have no information before me as to what size and form such extensions would be and how likely they are to be constructed. Consequently, I afford this limited weight.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons set out above, having had regard to the development plan read as a whole, and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Wilson

INSPECTOR