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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2023 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

**Decision by Chris Forrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3316194**

**31 Star Lane, Bromley, Orpington BR5 3LJ**

- 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 Calin Seicheli against the decision of the London Borough of Bromley Council.
  - The application Ref DC/22/04099/FULL6, dated 19 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2022.
  - The development proposed is a double storey side extension.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Main Issue

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

### Reasons for the Recommendation

#### *Character and appearance*

4. The appeal property is a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling located on the northern side of Star Lane within an established residential area. It features an existing single storey side and rear extension. Whilst there is a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of varying sizes and architectural styles along Star Lane, the northern part of the street where the appeal dwelling is located is characterised by small symmetrical blocks of terraced properties with hipped roofs. The gaps between these blocks contribute to a sense of spaciousness along this section of Star Lane.
  5. Whilst the appellant argues that the proposed first floor side extension would be a well-designed and logical completion, it would lie on the common boundary with the neighbouring property at No.29. As such, it would drastically reduce the visual gap between the two dwellings at first floor level thereby eroding the spaciousness which characterises this part of the street.
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6. I appreciate that the development would be set-back from the front elevation and would be finished with sympathetic materials. However, the excessive width of the resultant dwelling at first floor level would result in a cramped appearance. I find that it would appear awkward and bulky and, therefore, I concur with the Council that the development would detract from the character of the dwelling and the block it forms part of.
7. The appellant has drawn my attention to other developments in the area, including the property at the opposite end of the terrace as the appeal property (No.37) and Nos 53 and 57 Star Lane. However, from the evidence before me and what I observed on site, there are gaps between the respective developments and the side boundaries at Nos 36 and 53 which makes these developments materially different to the one before me. In respect of No.57, I understand that this was permitted some time ago and under a different set of planning policies to the ones before me now. Moreover, each proposal must be considered on its individual merits.
8. The appellant considers that Policy 8 of the London Borough of Bromley Local Development Framework Local Plan (2019) (the Local Plan) is not relevant as the proposal is not for the development of two or more storeys in height. However, the resultant dwelling would feature a two-storey side elevation that would remove the side space entirely at first floor level. Consequently, I find that Policy 8 is directly relevant to the proposal. Even if this was not the case, the closing of the gap at first floor level would still be harmful to the host dwelling and the wider area.
9. For the above reasons the proposal would adversely impact the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. It would conflict with Policies 6, 8 and 37 of the Local Plan which, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure proposals for residential extensions are of a high standard of design and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and complement the host dwelling in terms of scale, form and materials, and respect the space or gaps between buildings. It would also be at odds with the overarching aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

#### *Other matters*

10. I recognise the importance that the enlargement of the property would play in providing additional living space for the current occupiers. Notwithstanding that, improvements to the accommodation and layout to meet the needs of the occupants could be achieved with an alternative and more sympathetic design that would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
11. Whilst the construction of the proposed development would provide employment for traders, the benefits to the local economy would be limited and would not outweigh the harm I have identified.

#### **Recommendation**

12. The proposal would adversely impact the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. Given this, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the NPPF, which outweigh this finding.

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Thomas Courtney*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

**Inspector's Decision**

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

*Chris Forrett*

INSPECTOR