



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2023 by R Dickson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3322591

15 Cedars Road, Beckenham BR3 4JE

- 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 Cecil Edwards against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref 22/03939/FULL6, dated 4 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is for a single storey rear extension, external alterations and loft dormer.
-

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 Issues

3. The main issues are a) whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Elm Road Conservation Area; and b) the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupiers of No13 Cedars Road, with specific regard to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

The Elm Road Conservation Area (CA)

4. The appeal building is one of series of Gothic Revival style houses. They are locally listed buildings within the CA, their individual and collective significance and positive contribution to the CA being found in the originality and traditional appearance of their form, architectural quality, and features. The appeal building itself is a good example. It has a strong hierarchy to its decreasing window size moving up its front elevation, identifying the feature forward projecting gable. The rear of this is similar and an imposing part of the rear elevation as a whole but has been interrupted by a different window being inserted in the ground floor. Whilst the architectural quality of the building has been eroded slightly by this and the addition of a small conservatory, the rear elevation retains much of its characteristic opening sizes which also features, on the rear elevation, bold cill and header detail set against contrasting decorative banding to the brickwork.

5. The insertion of rooflights would modernise the roof's appearance, a feel which would noticeably jar with the period character of the building. The enlarging of window openings to form French style doors on the front and rear elevations would also disrupt the prevailing hierarchical approach to fenestration which is a defining feature of the building. This would be most noticeable, and unacceptably eroding, on the second-floor rear where, along with the insertion of a large box style dormer extension, it would give rise to a top-heavy appearance, unbalancing the architectural qualities of the building.
6. The full width single storey extension at the rear, along with its expansive use of modern full height glazing would all but obliterate the building's characteristic shape and, despite being single storey, dominate the feature gable shape. The fact this would be to the rear would not acceptably reduce the harm it would cause to a locally listed building in the CA.
7. I appreciate similar things have been done elsewhere but I am unsure as to how many have the benefit of express planning permission. In any event, most that I saw appeared to be of a much smaller scale than the proposed and as such not mutually comparable.
8. With the above in mind, the proposed development would cause harm to the special qualities of a locally listed building and, by association, the CA, accordingly, failing to either preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Due to the size of the building, its situation and the scale of the proposed development, this harm would be less than substantial in the language of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework), albeit worthy of great weight, and should thus be balanced against the public benefits.
9. The removal of the painting from the front brickwork would be of visual benefit to the collective value of the group of buildings. I also understand that the bricks to the front elevation would be refurbished to match other buildings, but such work would not be reliant on the proposed development. As such this can be afforded only limited weight. I have not seen any further public benefits in the evidence.
10. Accordingly, and for the above reasons, the harm I have found would not be outweighed. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the Council's aspirations of preserving and enhancing the CA, detailed in Policies 6, 8, 37, 39 and 41 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019 and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021, which seeks to conserve London's heritage.

Living Conditions

11. The proposed rear extension would be built near to the boundary between the appeal site and No 13 and would extend considerably past the rear elevation of the neighbouring property. As a result of the increased depth, coupled with the proximity to the neighbouring boundary, the proposal would create a long expanse of blank wall to the side of No 13, negatively impacting on the outlook for occupants. Accordingly, the proposed extension would be contrary to Policies 6 and 37 of the Local Plan which seek, amongst other things, to ensure new development is compatible with the surrounding area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. There would be harm arising from both the first and second main issue. The conflict this would have with the development plan, given there are no material

considerations worthy of sufficient weight to indicate differently, lead me to recommend the appeal be dismissed.

R Dickson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representatives' report and on that basis I dismiss the appeal.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR