



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 August 2023

by R Lawrence MRTPI, BSc (hons), PGDip (TP)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3322638

20 Repton Road, Bromley, Orpington BR6 9HS

- 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 M Lee against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/23/00985/FULL6, dated 10 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is Proposed single storey rear, two storey side extension and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Proposed single storey rear, two storey side extension and loft conversion at 20 Repton Road, Bromley, Orpington BR6 9HS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/23/00985/FULL6, dated 10 March 2023, 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: 7521-P-04-C (Existing & Proposed Plans and Elevations) and 7521-P-01-G (Existing and Proposed Plan and Elevations).
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development set out on the planning application form omits reference to the front porch, roof dormer and light lantern. All of these elements are clearly shown on the submitted plans, as such I have considered the appeal on this basis.
3. The plans submitted with the appeal show an existing outbuilding in the garden, however on my site visit this had been demolished. Ground works were also taking place on site including to the front and side of the property. The exact nature of the development under construction was not clear, however, this has not prejudiced my assessment of the appeal scheme which I have considered on the basis of the submitted plans.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached two storey residential property. The road is characterised by pairs of semi-detached properties with a separation between properties at first floor level. The proposed two storey side extension would reduce the separation between properties, with the ground floor element extending up to the boundary and the first-floor element retaining a modest gap.
6. The loss of a gap at ground floor level would appear in keeping with the surroundings, with a number of properties on the road having ground floor extensions up to the boundary. The first floor side extension would be both set back from the front elevation as well as set in from the side boundary. These factors would avoid the extensions resulting in an unduly cramped appearance. Although the separation at first floor would be reduced, the retained gap would be sufficient to preserve the character of the road, where there are a number of examples of properties with set back side extensions at first floor level.
7. The development would achieve the 1m first floor separation distance required by Policy 8 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019 (LP) but not at the ground floor. The policy refers to this spacing 'normally' being required for the full height of the building, which suggests this is not an absolute requirement in all cases. I also note that the supporting text focusses on the importance of retaining separation at first floor level and above. In this case, having regard to the wider context where ground floor extensions up to the boundary are common, the proposed first floor separation would be sufficient to avoid a harmful effect by way of terracing or an unduly cramped appearance.
8. The extensions to the rear and the front porch would be of an appropriate scale, would not alter the separation and more generally would appear acceptable including in terms of visual amenity. I, therefore, have no reason to take a different view to the Council who raise no objection to these elements.
9. There is a small degree of conflict with Policy 8 with regard to separation distances at ground floor. However, for the reasons given above, this would not result in any material harm in this context. Given the partial compliance with that policy, and compliance with policies 6 and 37, I am content that the development is consistent with the Development Plan read as a whole.

Conditions

10. The Council has suggested a number of conditions in the event of my allowing the appeal, I have considered these in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance. A plan numbers condition together with a condition to limit the timeframe for implementation are required in the interests of certainty. A matching materials condition is required in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to conditions.

R Lawrence

INSPECTOR