



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2023

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3330285

121 Crofton Road, Orpington BR6 8JA

- 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 Shirley Shen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application ref. DC/23/02062/FULL6, dated 25 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2023.
 - The proposal is for a first-floor side extension, hip to gable loft conversion & rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site consists of a semi-detached, two-storey house on Crofton Road with off-street parking to the front. It is located on a residential thoroughfare where there is no prevailing architectural style to the properties; Crofton Road is characterised by dwellings of various size, design and detailing. This notwithstanding, at my site visit I saw that the majority of main roofs to buildings in the immediate streetscene are pitched in nature, which to my mind suggests that there is a particular local distinctiveness that warrants protection.
 4. Conversely, the proposed extensions would introduce a substantially different gable roof to this part of Crofton Road that would appear incongruous when viewed in the context of other buildings in the street scape. Whilst I am cognisant that Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that decisions should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change, I consider that the use of a prominent gable roof such as that proposed by this appeal scheme would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, dominating the roof by virtue of its mass and bulk, and discordant to the local setting.
 5. I appreciate the multi-faceted nature of the vicinity, and that there are other examples of gable roofs opposite at nos. 120 and 122 Crofton Road. Nevertheless, these are subservient elements to the main roofs of the houses and are set back from the front elevations, and as such do not dominate the properties in the same way that the appeal proposal would.
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6. Similarly, the gable roof at 145 Crofton Road does not project over the side garage, and therefore is not as sizeable as the appeal scheme. The other instances listed in the grounds of appeal are further afield, where differing site and neighbourhood characteristics would occur. In any event, the appearance of other dwellings elsewhere would be a neutral consideration in any balance against planning harm, and I am mindful that each case must be assessed on its own merits.
7. I acknowledge that the property does not fall within a conservation area or similarly-designated locale, the scheme would be constructed from materials to complement the existing dwelling, a one metre gap from the built form to the side boundary would be retained, there would be no overbearing impact or loss of light to the neighbouring windows, and that no objections were raised from neighbours as part of the applications consultation. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified above.
8. I understand that an amended scheme has been suggested by the Council during the consideration of the application to show a pitched roof design to broadly match the adjoining residence. To my mind this would be more sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing house and those in the surrounds.
9. I find that the development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the local area. It would be in conflict with Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019, and the Council's adopted Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (July 2023), which together seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance.

Conclusion

10. Having regard to the above and all other stated issues, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR