
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: 31.01.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3331873

6 Little Thrift, Petts Wood, Orpington BR5 1NQ

- 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 Maria Russell against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application ref. DC/23/03056/FULL6, dated 7 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 3 October 2023.
 - The proposed development is for a double storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double storey side extension at 6 Little Thrift, Petts Wood, Orpington BR5 1NQ in accordance with the terms of the application, ref. DC/23/03056/FULL6, dated 7 August 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: 22-0267 Rev 10 D01, 22-0267 Rev 10 D03, 22-0267 Rev 10 D05, 22-0267 Rev 10 D07, 22-0267 Rev 10 D08.

3) No development above ground level shall commence until details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples and thereafter retained.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development having regard to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounds, including The Thrifts Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in the northern peripherals of Petts Wood, at the end of a cul-de-sac. It consists of a two-storey, detached house with off-street parking on the driveway to the front. The surrounding neighbourhood is residential in nature.

4. Being situated in the CA, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Paragraph 199 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
5. The special architectural and historic interest of the CA derives from the garden suburb principle. It has a highly ordered and regular appearance despite the variety of architectural design and detail. Lawns, shrubs, low hedges and trees are evident in generous gardens to the front and rear of the houses. The Petts Wood Historic Area Assessment (HAA) outlines that Little Thrift itself is a cul de sac surrounded by mature trees. Where the houses have hipped roofs these overhang with deep eaves supported on brackets over semi-circular double height bay windows. The decorative scalloped leadwork below the diamond leaded windows is also found again. The porches are recessed behind rendered arches.
6. The first floor element would be of small scale and subservient, set significantly behind the front elevation and bay windows of the host property and with the ridgeline running below that of the adjoining built form. To my mind, it would visually connect with the overall appearance of the house, without being imposing or dominant. I am therefore of the view that the scheme would not detract from the character of the existing dwelling itself.
7. Walking along Little Thrift from Great Thrift, the view of trees to the rear of the domestic curtilages is evident between and over the buildings. This arrangement is highlighted in HAA, "where the fanned orientation of the houses makes the most of these gaps to expose the woodland beyond".
8. The appeal residence lies at an angle to the roundabout towards the end of Little Thrift. Standing where the photograph at Fig.5 of the HAA was taken, the proposed first floor extension would barely be perceptible, and as such the juxtaposition between dwellings and woodland would not be adversely affected from this vantage point. I appreciate that as the appeal site is approached the element would become more visible, however I am satisfied that the impact would be only localised in nature as demonstrated on the proposed block plan.
9. The ground floor addition would retain a gap of 1 metre to the side boundary to meet with the provisions of Policy 8 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019 (LP). In my view the width of the extension would be acceptable and in proportion to the existing house, whilst also retaining adequate separation to the flank border and no.7 Little Thrift.
10. I note concerns in respect of the design and placement of the garage doors. Whilst the wall-mounted arrangement would be somewhat unusual, I consider that the overall impact would not be significantly different to a more standard inset approach; as such I do not assign any demonstrable harm in this respect.
11. Overall, I deem that the proposal would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounds, including the CA. It would meet Policies 6, 8, 37 and 41 of the LP, which require new development to be of an acceptable scale and appearance and to preserve or enhance conservation areas.

Conditions

12. I have considered the imposition of conditions in light of advice in Planning Policy Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans are listed for certainty.
13. A further condition requiring the submission of external materials would provide for a satisfactory appearance in the interests of the preservation of the heritage asset.

Conclusion

14. Given the foregoing and all other matters advanced, the appeal succeeds.

C Hall

INSPECTOR