



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2024

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/23/3323402

45 Meadow Road, Bromley BR2 0DX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Georgina Gainsford-De Giorgio against the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref 23/00236/FULL6 is dated 20 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with 3 x side dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the Council's delegated officer report differs from that used on the submitted planning application form, in that it also refers to elevational changes. Although elevational changes are not referred to in the description on the planning application form, these are clearly shown on the submitted plans and I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.
3. Whilst the appeal is made against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission, the Council has provided an officer report as well as a reason for refusal which set out its objections.
4. There is a reference in the Council's delegated officer report to the Sundridge Village Conservation Area. This appears to be an erroneous reference, and it is clear from the remainder of the evidence that the relevant Conservation Area within which the site lies, is the Shortlands Village Conservation Area (SVCA).

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the SVCA.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached two-storey dwelling with a simple mono-pitched roof, located within the SVCA. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.

7. The SVCA's significance can be summarised as a reflection of a modest railway village with artisan housing, including illustrating the history of the development of the area. The appeal site is located towards the end of a row of modest artisan Victorian style housing, which is characterised by simple pitched roof forms, and which makes a positive contribution to the SVCA.
8. The appeal proposal is for the addition of three dormers on the main roof slope to the side of the property. The dormers, both individually and in combination, would be of a significant scale, although they would have a slight setback from the front elevation and would feature pitched roof elements. The pitch on the dormers would be very shallow in contrast to the steep pitch on the main roof slope. The modest roof pitch on the dormers would result in the dormer cheeks appearing tall and prominent. The dormers would detract from the simple pitched roof form on the existing property, and the surrounding roofscape. As such, the proposal would detract from the simple pitched roof form, and in turn the appearance of the existing host property.
9. The dormer setback, together with the modest separation between the appeal property and its neighbour, are such that existing built form would partially screen views of the dormers. Nonetheless, the dormer closest to the frontage, as well as the central larger dormer, would be partially visible from a large portion of the opposite side of Meadow Road, as well as facing neighbouring properties. Whilst the limited vantage points would restrict the extent of the harm, the development would nonetheless detract from the traditional simple pitched roof forms, and in turn the character and appearance of the SVCA.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the SVCA. This is a matter to which I have had special regard and to which I give considerable importance and weight. This harm would be less than substantial in the context of paragraphs 205-209 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). However, there are no public benefits that would outweigh the harm in this case.
11. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies 6, 37 and 41 of the Bromley Local Plan. These policies and guidance seek to ensure that development is of a high standard of design, preserves and enhances the characteristics and appearance of Conservation Areas, and ensure that proposals respect the characteristics of the host dwelling. The development would also be at odds with the requirements of the Framework relating to designated heritage assets.

Other Matters

12. I understand that the development is required to meet the needs of a growing family. This is nonetheless a private benefit to the scheme and as such carries very limited weight.
13. I note concerns regarding the service provided by the Council. This does not affect the merits of the proposal itself and as such has not been determinative.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

R Lawrence

INSPECTOR