



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2023 by N Manley BA (Hons)

Decision by S Edwards BA MA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/23/3325767

8 Beacon Road, Bexley, Erith DA8 2JS

- 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 Mrs Senga against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 22/03108/FUL, dated 21 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of roof space involving increased ridge height, rear dormer extension with Juliet balcony and provision of two rooflights to front roofslope and a window to the side elevation.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description of the proposed works detailed on the application form has been amended in subsequent documents. I have adopted the description used in the Council's decision notice, which reflects accurately and concisely the proposal before me.
4. On 26 April 2023, the Bexley Local Plan 2023 (BLP) was adopted by the Council. This supersedes both the Bexley Unitary Development Plan (2004) (to the exception of the appended Design and Development Control Guideline) and Bexley's Core Strategy (2012). Accordingly, I shall consider the appeal in accordance with the most up-to-date policies and the Design and Development Control Guideline 2, on which the parties have had the opportunity to comment as part of the appeal process.
5. The Government published a revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in December 2023. Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

7. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached dwelling located on the north side of Beacon Road. The surrounding area is primarily residential and largely characterised by the presence of two storey semi-detached homes facing onto the road and following a regular street plan. The houses in the area all share a similar style, featuring a traditional design with brick and rendered elevations, gabled roofs with a consistent roof line, giving the area a uniform suburban character.
8. The proposed dormer would span across the entire rear roof slope of the property and fail to preserve some form of subservience in relation to the existing roof. The size of the proposed dormer, combined with the existing profile and pitch of the proposed roof, would result in the dormer emerging as the dominant feature of the property, giving it a top-heavy, bulky appearance, which would appear incongruous and detract from the otherwise largely uniform character of the surrounding dwellings.
9. The positioning of the dormer to the rear of the property and use of matching materials would not mitigate the aforementioned harm which would arise from its size and relationship with the host property. Consequently, it would still result in a bulky addition which would not be subservient to or respectful of the host property and surrounding area. Moreover, given the spacing between no 8 and no 10 and the positioning of the properties, the dormer would not only be visible from the street scene on Beacon Road, but would also be visible to users of the garages situated directly behind the appeal site.
10. Furthermore, as a result of the proposed development, the roof of the appeal dwelling would exceed the height of the ridge on the adjoining property and other nearby dwellings. When viewed from the street scene this change would disrupt the regular and consistent roof lines in the vicinity, thus leading to a top-heavy appearance which would disrupt the existing balanced and uniform appearance of the host's semi-detached pair and wider street scene.
11. The chimney stacks add interest and rhythm to the consistent ridge lines and simple roof forms which are key characteristics of this residential area. Whilst the ridge height increase might be relatively limited, it would nevertheless be noticeable and introduce a discordant feature in the street scene, which would detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
12. I therefore conclude the combined elements of the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. Consequently, the appeal scheme would conflict with policy DP11 of the BLP, which notably seeks to ensure that development protects or enhances the area's character, is complimentary to the surrounding area and contributes positively to the street scene. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with the Design and Development Control Guideline 2 appended to the Unitary Development Plan (2004). Amongst other things, this guideline stipulates development should respect the existing building's character and specifies the

height of any extension should not surpass the ridge height of the current building.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Manley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR