



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2024 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/23/3334262

13 Florence Road, Bexley, London, SE2 9HB

- 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 Ms D Pirou against the decision of the London Borough of Bexley Council.
 - The application Ref 23/02320/FUL, dated 18 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension and ground floor front extension.
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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 Matter

3. The Government has published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (the Framework). I have had regard to this document in reaching my conclusions.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - the impact of the development on the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at Nos 11, 13a and 13b Florence Road with regards to outlook and overshadowing.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey terraced dwelling with a long and narrow rear garden. There are mature trees located at the bottom of the garden, lying on the common boundary with No 11 Florence Road. The site sits within an established residential area characterised by blocks of terraced
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- dwelling with hipped roofs and narrow rear gardens. Many dwellings in the surrounding area feature small outbuildings and garages in the rear gardens.
6. The proposed annexe would appear excessively bulky within this context, given its significant depth of approximately 10 metres. It would also occupy the full width of the garden and feature a pitched roof with a ridge reaching a height of 3.9 metres. Whilst the appellant states that the proposed building would be suitably scaled, its footprint would be larger than the footprint of the host dwelling and would thus appear as an incongruously large and dominant structure that would fail to be sufficiently subservient to the appeal dwelling.
 7. The proposed development would not accord in with the surrounding built form due to its unreasonable scale. It would be read as an obtrusive structure that would negatively impact the character and appearance of the area. Whilst it is noted there are outbuildings within rear gardens in the surrounding area, none appear to be of a similar scale to what is proposed. The appellant makes limited reference to other applications in the borough which would support the proposed scale of development but has not provided any information or documents relating to these applications. I therefore cannot make an informed and conclusive view as to whether these would be of direct relevance to the appeal scheme.
 8. As such, the development would adversely impact the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with paragraph 135 of the Framework, Policies SP5 and DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan (2023) which together aim to ensure developments are well-designed and respect local character.

Living Conditions

9. The appellant opines that the single storey height of the proposal and the presence of large trees on the boundary would mean it would be unlikely to have an overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers. However, the proposed building would be 2.75 metres in height to the eaves and 3.9 metres to the ridge, and would appear as an overly prominent structure when seen from the rear gardens and rear windows of the neighbouring properties at Nos 11, 13a and 13b. As the proposal would occupy a considerable proportion of the plot, its bulk and mass would be substantial. It would be read as a dominant and incongruous addition that would have an overbearing effect and adversely impact the outlook of the neighbouring residents both from rear windows and gardens.
10. With regards the potential for loss of light, despite the adverse impact on outlook, given the proposed building would be single storey, it would not overshadow the gardens of the neighbouring properties to an unacceptable degree.
11. Given the above, the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at Nos 11, 13a and 13b Florence Road with regards to outlook. It would also conflict with paragraph 135 of the Framework and Policy DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan (2023) which together aim to ensure developments protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Planning Balance and Recommendation

12. The appellant states that the proposal would not have any adverse impact on heritage assets, highway safety, trees and highlights that there would be sufficient garden space for the current and future occupants of the appeal dwelling. I also note references to good transport links. However, these are largely neutral factors which do not attract any significant weight in support of the proposed development or justify the highlighted harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
13. I have found that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would negatively affect neighbouring amenity. It would therefore conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole, and additionally conflict with the Framework.
14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR