



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2024 by R Parker BSc (Hons)

Decision by S Edwards BA MA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 JULY 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/23/3331283

28 Petts Wood Road, Petts Wood, Bromley, Orpington BR5 1LB

- 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 Mr and Mrs V Sandhu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref is 23/01337/FULL6.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'First floor side/rear extension and conversion of enlarged roof space to habitable accommodation including rear dormer extension and side roof light'.
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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. In December 2023, the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). 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.
4. The description of development as detailed on the application form has been amended in subsequent documents. I have adopted the description included in the appeal form, which details the proposal accurately and concisely.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site comprises a two-storey, semi-detached, 20th century dwelling set in a large plot. It forms part of an established residential area designated as the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC). The Petts

Wood ASRC is a pleasant suburban area of housing from the inter-War period, originally designed on the garden suburb principle, with spaciouly placed large plots.

7. As noted in Annex 2 to the London Borough of Bromley Local Plan 2019 (Local Plan), the separation between buildings as well as the rhythm and pattern of the houses adds to its special character. Despite a number of alterations and side extensions having taken place, the separation between properties on Petts Wood Road maintains an uncrowded and open feel. Houses are typically set in good-sized plots and unaltered semi-detached pairs display an attractive symmetrical form. These features give the area a pleasing, semi-rural, character.
8. For a proposed extension of two or more storeys in height, Policy 8 of the Local Plan requires a minimum one metre space from the side boundary of the site to be retained for the full height and length of the building. However, it also makes it clear that where higher standards of separation already exist within residential areas, proposals will be expected to provide a more generous side space. As noted in the supporting text to Policy 8, the retention of space around residential buildings is important, to prevent a cramped appearance and unrelated terracing from occurring.
9. The appeal proposal is for a wraparound first floor side and rear extension, combined with the enlargement of the roof space to include a rear dormer extension and a side roof light. Although the proposed extension would be set away from the side boundary, it would significantly reduce the current visual gap between the appeal property and its neighbouring dwelling. This would result in a cramped form of development, unacceptably eroding the open and spacious character of the area. Also, the proposed extension would unbalance and disrupt the current symmetry of the semi-detached pair. Consequently, the proposed side alterations would harmfully affect the character of the area and the ASRC.
10. Whilst the appellant has referred to examples of extensions sited within proximity to an adjoining side boundary, the pattern of development remains predominantly characterised by wider gaps between buildings. In some instances where side development has occurred, this has had a detrimental effect to the spacious feel of Petts Wood Road. Therefore, these do not justify a development which would deteriorate the spacious and open character of the area.
11. One of the examples brought forward by the appellant was a scheme allowed on appeal at 10 Petts Wood Road (APP/G5180/D/18/3194319). Despite its relative proximity to the appeal site, the development occurred in a somewhat different context. Separation distances in the vicinity of the considered proposal are wider than at the previous appeal scheme, increasing the importance of maintaining this facet of the area's character. For these reasons, very limited weight can be ascribed to these examples and appeal decision.
12. The proposed side extension would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area, and would therefore conflict with Policies 6, 8, 37 and 44 of the Local Plan. Amongst other things, these require development to complement the layout of its surrounding area, and positively contribute to its heritage context. They also make clear that spaces or gaps between buildings

should be respected or maintained, where these contribute to the special character of an area.

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.

R Parker

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