

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2024

by M Ollerenshaw BSc (Hons) MTPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 NOVEMBER 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/24/3341558

Kent House, Plawsfield Road, Beckenham, Bromley BR3 1JD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Alison Jackson c/o Peter Evans Architects against the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/03035/FULL1.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed, and planning permission is refused.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal is against the Council's failure to give notice of its decision within the prescribed period. The Council's case and its putative reason for refusal are set out in the statement of case.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Barnmead Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a part one, part two storey building located at the end of Plawsfield Road. The building is used as a coffee shop and florists. It faces onto a forecourt and a busy thoroughfare adjacent to Kent House Railway Station and the railway line. The surrounding area is otherwise residential.
5. The site is within the Barnmead Road Conservation Area (CA). The CA derives its significance from the Victorian villas built around Kent House Station, the development of which marked a stage in the growth of Beckenham from a village to a suburb. The CA is characterised by semi-detached two storey houses of varied design and good architectural quality, detailing and materials, which are arranged along linear building lines. The generous plot sizes of properties, and the wide tree lined roads that they front onto, provide a spacious, leafy character, and the unmetalled road surfaces aid an understanding of residential areas in the era of horse transport.
6. The appeal building is an attractive structure dating from 1887. It retains a traditional form and appearance and makes a positive contribution to the

character and appearance of the CA. The two storey part of the building is well proportioned with a distinctive hipped roof and elaborate Victorian detailing, notably including the fine pargeting at first floor level. The building includes an existing single storey, flat roof projection on the southern side with a parapet wall to the front elevation.

7. It is proposed to extend above this single storey element to provide additional display space for the florists. The extension would be slightly inset from the ground floor beneath, and the eaves and ridge of the new hipped roof would be set below the main roof of the building. The external materials of the development would broadly reflect the existing building.
8. While the proposal would achieve some subservience to the existing building, it would still be a substantial addition to one side. The scale and massing of the proposal, and the new hipped roof in particular, would have the effect of visually unbalancing the proportions of the building and undermining its historic form and architectural integrity.
9. Much of the pargeting and intricate roof detailing to the side elevation, which is a distinctive feature of the building and an important contributor to its character, would be concealed under the new roof structure and would not be replicated in the extension. The horizontal emphasis of the new windows would not reflect the proportions and design of the existing first floor windows.
10. In conclusion, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the building, the surrounding area and it would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the CA. It therefore conflicts with Policies 37 and 41 of the Bromley Local Plan (2019) and Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), which amongst other things seek high quality design appropriate to local character and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.
11. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. This harm, which still carries great weight, should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed expansion of a business which serves the local community would be in line with the aims of local and national policies, with associated social and economic benefits. However, given the small-scale nature of the proposal, only limited weight can be attached to these benefits which would not outweigh the less than substantial harm.

Other Matters

12. I note the other concerns raised by third parties, including the effect of the proposal on the neighbouring occupiers' living conditions and an adjacent tree. However, as I am dismissing the appeal, it is not necessary for me to consider these matters further as they would not alter the outcome of the appeal.

Conclusion

13. The proposal does not accord with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations that outweigh this finding. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Ollerenshaw

INSPECTOR