



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 March 2025

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/24/3355505

53A Sandhurst Road, Orpington, BR6 9HN

- 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 Stuart Emm against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/02340/FULL6.
 - The development proposed is the removal of existing roof and chimneys and formation of new hipped roof with flat crown to provide rooms in the roof space with rear window and rooflights to front and sides; the height of the roof over the existing two storey rear extension is to be increased.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the host property and the locality and b) living conditions for neighbours.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, hipped roof, detached home with reasonable proportions and façade, on a rectangular plot. The street is of established residential character and includes a range of homes with, for the most part, traditional ridge roofs with hip or gable ends. These, along with gardens, result in a pleasing suburban scene. The proposal is as described above.
 4. Whilst not increasing the scale of vertical walling on three sides the roof of the host property would be subject to radical change. The property's appearance would markedly alter and, regrettably, this would be in a visually negative way. Increasing the steepness of the pitch and its bulk would look alien and awkward in the scene and the planned flat roof would stand out as running contrary to local established character. To my mind the proposed scheme would appear excessively 'top-heavy' and be visually ill-at-ease within this pleasantly innocuous stretch of street. It would lack the necessary sense of subtlety. Although not widely on show, I would also conclude that the rear wall approach to creating an extra floor would have very little finesse; a strange three storey elevation would be created.
-

5. In all the circumstances the proposed development overall would be harmful to the character and appearance of this property and its locality; the scheme would represent inappropriate design and disproportionate scale for this context.
6. Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan (LP) are relevant. Taken together, and amongst other matters, they seek well designed development which is appropriate to a site and its setting and of a suitable scale, appearance and character to protect local distinctiveness. I conclude that the appeal scheme would run contrary to these policies.

Living conditions

7. The Council is concerned about impact upon residential amenities of residents at No 55 Sandhurst Road, a single storey property. However, the rear projecting element which is planned to increase in height lies some distance within the host plot and is to the north; I am thus not convinced that any significant loss of outlook or undue shadowing would result. The principal rear wall of the host property would continue on its present alignment which is broadly in line with the rear of No 55 and therefore not visually intrusive or otherwise impinging.
8. The north side wall of the neighbouring dwelling already faces, across its side driveway, a vertical two storey wall topped by a roof pitching away. Whilst the roof would increase in mass and angle the reality would be that the vertical walling would continue to be the principal scene from the side of this dwelling and alterations above that would have very limited, if any, impact upon outlook and daylight.
9. Looking back from the middle or end of their rear garden neighbours would notice increased bulk and the uncomfortable design which I note above but I would not class this intermittent viewing as an overarching loss of amenity.
10. LP Policy 37 seeks to secure development which would protect living conditions for neighbours. I conclude that the appeal scheme would not conflict with this policy in this regard.

Other matters

11. I understand the Appellant's wish to modernise and increase the extent of accommodation at this property. I have considered other extensions drawn to my attention and also those I observed locally but found none to be directly comparable given scale, positioning and context. Furthermore, in my mind they do not necessarily set a benchmark for good design which could encourage replication. In any event I must assess this case on its own merits. I recognise a range of dormer types locally, but this scheme would go beyond a dormer phase. I do appreciate that the host property is detached rather than the more frequently occurring semi-detached form and this might be an argument for greater freedom of design, but nevertheless, reasonable quality should be the aim. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant, but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to one of the main issues identified above.

12.I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered. Key objectives of the document are to safeguard qualities of the built environment and residential amenity and the development plan policies which I cite mirror these.

Overall conclusion

13.For the reasons given above I conclude that whilst the appeal proposal would not have an undue impact on living conditions for neighbours, it would have an unacceptable adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR