



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 March 2025

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/25/3358370

34 St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, BR5 2SY

- 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 Ebe Odebode against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley
 - The application Ref is DC/24/03254/FULL6.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of front porch and detached garage; construction of part one/two storey front/side extension incorporating new porch and part one/two storey rear extension with Juliet balcony.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the 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 semi-detached home, with reasonable scale and façade on a very deep rectangular plot. The wide St Paul's Wood Hill road is of established residential character and includes a range of largely unremarkable but well-proportioned homes with, for the most part, traditional ridge roofs with hip or gable ends. The properties, gardens, tree and grass verge road sides and woodland backdrops result in a pleasing suburban scene. The proposal is as described above.
 4. The overall works planned are considerable to the side and at ground floor level to the rear, but it is the proposed first floor rear addition which most draws my attention, regrettably in a negative way. This upper-level addition would mean that the host property would be subject to radical change. The size and form of this addition would be very dominant, incorporate very little or no subservient attributes and just appear as an out-of-scale, poorly designed, excessive adjunct to the original home.
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5. Dimensions, in terms of height and projection, would be larger than would be cohesive in my opinion, and the gable-end form would further emphasise this. The property's appearance would markedly alter, and this would be in a visually negative way. It would lack the necessary sense of subtlety. Although not widely on show, I would conclude that a rear upper-level extension of this scale would have insufficient finesse.
6. 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.
7. 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

8. The planned rear first floor extension element would be to almost full ridge height, have substantial width, embody an unsubtle gable-end form, and project very appreciably from the main rear wall of the host property. By any standards this would be a large, bulky addition to a 'normal' sized semi-detached property, and I would deem it as ungainly and, for the wrong reasons, eye-catching for neighbours. The structure would be overbearing when seen from the nearest neighbouring garden and would uncomfortably detract from a sense of space presently enjoyed. Even with the distance from the side boundary, there would be an undue feeling of being hemmed-in and dominated by this large upper-level built form.
9. LP Policy 37 seeks to secure development which would protect living conditions for neighbours. I conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with this policy in this regard.

Other matters

10. I understand the wish to enlarge this dwelling, and I appreciate that the scheme would bring benefits to occupiers, and that this run of rear gardens are exceptional in size. I was sorry to read that the Appellant did not feel that the Council handled the processing of the application sympathetically or with dialogue. I note that there does now appear to be some scope for 'compromise', but I have to assess the refused scheme before me and not subsequent overlays or suggestions from either main party. A further planning application would be needed for any formal decision on a revised scheme.
11. I have considered other elevations and roof forms drawn to my attention, and additional ones I observed locally, but found none to be directly comparable given scale, positioning and context. In any event I must assess this case on its own merits. 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 the main issues identified above.

12. The National Planning Policy Framework has been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality as well as on living conditions for neighbours. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR