



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 June 2025

by **S Simms BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/W/25/3359002

235 Main Road, Sidcup DA14 6QS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr S Hossain against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application ref. is 24/01635/FUL
 - The development proposed is rooms in the roof to form a 1-bedroom flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and
 - whether the proposal would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, having particular regard to ceiling height, outlook, and storage.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The site comprises a large detached two-storey Victorian house converted into two flats, one ground and one first floor. The hipped roof has one ridge parallel to the street and two more running back from it at right angles with a valley between. The left one as seen from the street also projects forward over a half-octagon bay. There is hard surface and a door to the front. A side gate and passageway lead to external stairs to the upper flat, and beyond to a side door and rear garden.
4. The character of the area is mixed with semi-detached Victorian villas, some in commercial use, two car showrooms opposite and a two-and-a-half storey modern building behind the site containing flats and healthcare uses. Part of this abuts the rear garden of the appeal site, about ten metres from the rear elevation of the building but contains only rooflights. A neighbouring house has a roof extension to the side of its outrigger and there are other such roof extensions nearby.
5. The proposal would convert the rearmost two hips to gables and fill the valley to ridge height, forming a 'crown' roof with a central flat surface. Each slope and flat surface would have roof lights, and the rear gable would have two windows, one obscure glazed. A further step, landing and door would be installed at the top of the external stairs and would lead to a new internal staircase up to the flat.

6. The additional step and landing at the side of the building would have little impact, being only visible from the street or rear through a narrow angle and alongside the existing stairs. The main impact would be to the rear, where bulk would be added and the height of the rear wall increased by half, creating an odd-shaped area of brickwork. However, this would be in the context of other rear roof extensions and visible to so few people that its impact would be quite limited.
7. Consequently, I do not consider that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would therefore comply with Policy DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan (2023) and Policy D4 of the London Plan (2021), which require high-quality design based on appropriate analysis of context.

Living conditions

8. The submitted drawings indicate that the proposed flat would provide just under 58sqm of floor space, but this includes the stairs and height-restricted areas. The appellant states that this would provide a 1-bed 2-person dwelling compatible with the standards in the London Plan and Nationally Described Space Standards.
9. The Council assesses the area with a 2.5m ceiling height would be about 35sqm, which is less than the 75% of the floor area required by the London Plan.
10. However, this is partly due to the proposed floor space exceeding the standard. Applied to the standard for a 1-bed 2-person dwelling, the proportion proposed would be 70%. The additional height-restricted areas would be useful and mitigate what is only a slight shortfall in full-height storage space.
11. Nonetheless, because the flat would have only two vertical windows, one of which would be obscure glazed, its occupants would have limited outlook. Combined with the restricted headroom, this would feel oppressive and fail to provide an adequate standard of living conditions for future occupiers.
12. This would be contrary to Policy DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan (2023) and Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021). I attach significant weight to this policy conflict.

Other Matters

13. Whilst the proposal would provide an additional dwelling, which would contribute to housing needs, I have found that it would provide an inadequate standard of living conditions, so I attach no more than modest weight to this benefit.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

S Simms

INSPECTOR