



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/22/3307613

5 Brookside Road, Istead Rise, Gravesend DA13 9JJ

- 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 Tim Down against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20220611, dated 7 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 2 August 2022.
 - The development is a proposed first floor side extension and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.

Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling with off-street parking to the front. It is located within a row of other buildings of broadly similar size, design and detailing. The wider area is predominantly residential in nature.
4. Alterations to semi-detached properties will inevitably result in an imbalance to an original pair. Many other houses along Brookside Road have first floor side extensions that are analogous to the appeal proposal, and are part of a pair of semi-detached units where only one of the two has been altered in this manner. I observed that some of the extended houses in the streetscene have retained a hipped roof form, but there are also a number with gable ends, whilst seemingly all the additions are flush with the front elevations and ridge lines of their host property.
5. Within this context I am of the view that the first floor side element and gable end to the roof would be acceptable; the proposal would visually connect with the overall appearance of the host dwelling, without dominating it, and respond to the original design characteristics. Furthermore, any imbalance to the pair of semi-detached houses would not be so harmful to the setting as to warrant a refusal of the appeal on this ground.

6. The loft conversion would include the formation of a flat-roof dormer window in the rear roofslope of the dwelling. Notwithstanding my reasoning in respect of the first floor side extension, I am of the view that this large, unbroken feature would appear boxy and bulky, and being flush with the ridge line would lack subservience. Moreover, the fenestration to the rear elevation is misaligned, with the openings offset in relation to those in the floor below. The dormer window would be clearly visible from the private amenity spaces of surrounding houses, dominating the upper level of the main house, and having an intrusive effect by virtue of the scale and extent across the roof of the building.
7. I acknowledge those other matters that have been advanced in support of the development; there would be no adverse harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of surrounding properties, there have been no objections from local residents, and layout of the dwelling would meet the living requirements of the appellant and his family. However, none of these points could justify the harm I have identified above.
8. Although the first floor side extension is acceptable, I conclude that the rear dormer window would result in harm to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the local area. It would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, which seeks to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance. It would also be inconsistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conclusion

9. Given my reasoning and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR