



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 March 2025

by **Nicola Davies BA DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/25/3360603

42 Cricketers Drive, Meopham, Gravesend, KENT DA13 0AX

- 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 Krzysztof Twardy against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 20241081.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of an existing rear garage, conservatory and erection of a new side and rear extension including a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have taken the description of proposed development from the planning application form although I note it is expressed differently on other documents.

Main Issues

3. The main issues raised by this appeal are the effect of the proposed development on: -
 - a) The character and appearance of the host property; and
 - b) The living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 40 and 44 Cricketers Drive, particularly in regard of privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The rear roof extension would project from the rear roof slope and encompass the majority of the rear scape. It would be a large and long feature that would create a boxy, bulky and dominant addition to the roof at the top of the dwelling. Being sited close to the ridge, eaves and side elevations it would lack subservience and, as such, would visually overwhelm the rear roof. Given its overall size it would have an intrusive effect upon the roof scape. Consequently, the roof extension would be a visually harmful addition to the dwelling. This visual harm would be clearly visible in the outlook from existing neighbouring occupiers most notably when viewed in the outlook from their rear gardens.
5. There are existing properties in the locality that host dormer style rear loft conversions, as I saw to be the case at No.40 that has been highlighted as an

example by the appellant. However, I have not been provided the details of those developments, therefore, those developments may have been considered against a different development plan to that which is currently in place. Notwithstanding this, the existence of other such examples does not justify further such development where visual harm would arise.

6. I have also been referred to two Lawful Development Certificates and other planning permissions that have been granted relating to the erection of rear dormer extensions incorporating Juliet balconies. However, the addresses provided indicate those to be at other locations and do not relate to development within Cricketers Drive. Those examples therefore offer little support in favour of the proposal.
7. The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Householder Alterations/Extensions Design Guide 2021 provides guidance as to the acceptability of a single storey rear extension and single storey side extension. The Guidelines advise that separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of a property as part of the character of the area. The side extension would be constructed up to the side common boundary of the site. However, I saw that other development has taken place in the locality up the side boundaries of sites.
8. The Council indicates that the footprint of the dwelling would more than double that of the original dwelling and considers the proposal would be out of scale, such that it would overwhelm the original dwelling. However, being single storey, it would be of modest height. The side extension would be in line with the existing building frontage. I saw that a single storey side extension has been added to No. 31, opposite the appeal site, that is flush with the original building frontage of that dwelling. Given the wrap around extension's limited height, it would not significantly visually compete with the existing two-storey dwelling house.
9. Notwithstanding the acceptability of the ground floor extension, I conclude that the proposed roof dormer extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property. The proposal would, therefore conflict with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, SPD - Householder Alterations/Extensions Design Guide and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). That policy and the Framework seek, amongst other matters, development to be visually attractive as a result of good architecture with the SPD requiring a high standard of design for rear roof extensions.

Privacy

10. The roof conversion would also include the creation of a large Juliet balcony style window. This would provide elevated outlook at the rear of the dwelling that would facilitate observation of the private rear outdoor living spaces of the properties either side. I accept that this overlooking would be toward the rearmost part of the gardens rather than the private space near to the rear of the dwelling houses. Nonetheless, these are private gardens spaces. Such observation, whether actual or perceived, would diminish the enjoyment of these outdoor living spaces harming the enjoyment the existing occupiers of the neighbouring properties should reasonably expect to enjoy.

11. I acknowledge that there are examples of large roof extensions with windows close by that create an existing sense of overlooking and loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers. Whilst this may be so, this does not justify further development taking place that would harm the living conditions of existing occupiers.
12. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 40 and 44 Cricketers Drive, particularly in regard of privacy. The proposal would, therefore conflict with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, SPD2 – Residential Layout Guidelines 2020 and the provisions of the Framework. That policy, SPD and the Framework seek, amongst other matters, development to safeguard amenity, including privacy, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land.

Other Matters

13. The proposed development would comply with the Council's residential layout guidelines, the Technical Housing Standards and the Nationally Described Space Standards. It would also include an electric charging point and an accessible refuse bin area as part of the development. Furthermore, the extensions would facilitate the modernisation of a family home. I accept these are benefits of the proposed development. However, these matters do not overcome the visual harm that I have identified above or the harm to neighbouring residential amenity. As such, these benefits would not justify the grant of planning permission in this case.

Conclusion

14. Having regard to the above findings, the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Davies

INSPECTOR