



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2019

by **Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd May 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/19/3222670

44 The Covert, Petts Wood, Orpington BR6 0BU

- 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 Mrs K Moller against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/18/05356/FULL6, dated 26 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is a velux type roof window to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The development has been carried out and I am considering this appeal retrospectively.

Main Issue

3. This is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, with regard to the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character.

Reasons

4. The property is a 1930's 2 storey semi-detached dwelling located in the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC). Prior to the development, the dwelling was symmetrical to its adjoining pair, containing a gable front projecting from a dual pitched roof, with flared eaves and elaborate porch supported on dark wooden beams. Detailing on the dwelling is typical of the time, and the Council, along with interested parties including a resident's association, assert the dwellings were built by Noel Rees, a notable designer of the time in the Petts Wood area.
5. The area has a unique, verdant, picturesque appearance and well-preserved spacious character, indicative of a high quality early 20th century garden suburb. The consistency in the front elevation roof lines is largely untouched by roof extensions or conversions and the symmetry between pairs of houses is of importance in defining the character of the area.
6. The roof light has been inserted in the front roof slope. It is located near to the ridge and in the middle of this section of roof, projecting conspicuously. Owing to the design of the dwellings, this roof form is large, sweeping and a prominent feature of the house. It was also identical to its pair.

7. The effect of the roof light, whilst being relatively small, has disrupted the roof slope and caused imbalance to the pair of dwellings. Its projection appears awkward, overly modern and incongruous. Owing to this unique setting, it does not respect, enhance and strengthen the special and distinctive qualities of the ASRC.
8. Within the street scene of The Covert, I observed one other roof light to the front elevation at No 8. However, it appears this was granted planning permission before the adoption of the Bromley Local Plan (January 2019) (LP). Furthermore, No 8 is detached and there were also more modern dwellings nearby. Therefore, its setting is very different to the appeal dwelling, as is the setting of other roof lights on different streets.
9. Additionally, an Article 4 Direction is in place for the ASRC, removing the permitted development right to insert roof lights to the front elevation, and it is clear the Council seeks to control the insertion of roof lights. This matter weighs considerably on my mind, as whilst each proposal is considered upon its own merits, allowing this appeal would set a precedent for other roof lights in the street. This could lead to further imbalance between semi-detached dwellings and undermine the quality and unspoilt nature of the ASRC.
10. Consequently, the development has an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the ASRC. This conflicts with Policies 6, 37 and 44 of the LP, which together seek to ensure developments are of a high standard of design and respect, enhance and strengthen the special and distinctive qualities of Areas of Special Residential Character, positively contributing to the existing street scene.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR