

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2016

by Ray Wright BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 01 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/16/3157285
52 Castle Drive, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6RP

- 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 and Mrs Patel against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref SE/16/01523/HOUSE was refused by notice dated 2 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a 'two storey side and single storey rear extension.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side and single storey rear extension at 52 Castle Drive, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6RP, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SE/16/01523/HOUSE, dated 18 May 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development, hereby permitted, shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development, hereby permitted, shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: LA/05 and LA/05/1.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development, hereby permitted, shall match those used in the existing building.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey, terrace dwelling in a group of four with a hipped gabled frontage and pitched hipped roof to its flank. It occupies a plot at a bend in the road, with its side wall facing the highway. The proposal is for a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
 4. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) indicates there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but confirms good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks 'Allocations and Development Management Plan' 2015 (ADMP) similarly requires a high quality design respecting the character of the area with the form of development responding to its surroundings. More detailed guidance is set out within the Sevenoaks 'Residential Extensions' Supplementary Planning Document 2009.
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5. The Council raise no objections to the rear extension incorporated into proposed development. Due to its single storey form, and overall size it would have limited impact on the wider setting of the site or on the occupiers of neighbouring properties and, therefore, I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
6. The side extension would have a width of 4.00 metres and a depth of 6.8 metres. It would be set back around 0.8 metres from the main front wall of the house and have a hipped roof with a ridge line slightly lower than the original property. This would give the extension some subservience and would not overly disrupt the original form of the dwelling. The perception of bulk of the extension would also be reduced due to the site level being lower than the footway to Castle Drive. Some screening currently exists from the shrubbery on the small green to front of the property.
7. A gap of around 1.5 to 1.8 metres is shown to be retained to the side garden boundary. This spacing would allow existing fencing and shrubbery to remain and an element of the current spaciousness of this end of terrace plot would be retained.
8. The siting would mean the flank wall of the extension would be in front of the building line of a pair of semi-detached properties to the rear. However, a distance of around 25m would be retained between these two elements, and from the highway the frontages of the houses to the rear and the extension would not be seen in the same plane. Consequently, the impact of this relationship would be limited and, to my mind, the extension, including its blank side elevation, would not be overly prominent or out of keeping in this section of the road. While 80 Oxenhill Road, further to the north, would retain a larger spacing to its boundary than that proposed in the appeal scheme, any openness on that plot is currently largely lost due to significant tree planting to its side boundary.
9. Overall the proposed design would suitably integrate with the main dwelling and be in scale and proportion with it. Although clearly visible, the extension would not be an unduly dominant feature on the plot or within the street scene.
10. I conclude the development would not be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such there would be no conflict with the design requirements of the Framework, or Policy EN1 of the ADMP.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

12. The Council put forward 3 conditions should the appeal succeed. The standard commencement condition is required. A condition referring to the relevant plans is also necessary for certainty. To fully integrate the extension with the existing house and to ensure the details are appropriate for this location, it is important that suitable matching external finishes are used. Therefore, a condition requiring proposed external materials to match the existing is reasonable.

Ray Wright

INSPECTOR