

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2016

by J R Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/16/3157706

1 Manor View, Springcroft, Hartley DA3 8BA

- 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 David Finnerty against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref SE/16/01058/HOUSE, dated 8 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is loft extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow located at the end of Manor View with a side boundary to Manor Drive. The main part of the dwelling includes occupied roofspace with dormers to front and rear roof slopes. A single storey side extension is positioned close to the Manor Drive boundary. This step-down from the higher roof form of the main part of the dwelling results in a highly open aspect adjacent to the junction of Manor View with Manor Drive.
 4. To the front the extension involves a continuation of the roof slope and box dormer across the existing single storey element. While this would result in a taller building across its full width, the design would maintain a similar character and appearance to the row of adjacent properties along the same side of Manor View. Moreover, the angled roof and integrated design with the existing dwelling, despite reducing some of the current openness provided by the single storey element, would not be so incongruous to result in unacceptably harmful effects seen from the front.
 5. Views of the rear and side of the appeal property approaching from the east along Manor Drive are particularly prominent. This is because of the set-back from the road frontage of the property 'Chatenay', which is positioned behind the appeal property. This provides a more open aspect and exposes the dwelling to longer-range views than is the case from the front.
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6. From this perspective the extended dwelling would present a tall expanse of brick wall that would be less well integrated with the design of the host dwelling than the angled roof slope to the front. The extent of this additional development close to the road in a highly prominent position would contrast unfavourably with the existing single storey element, which complements the open aspect of the road junction, Manor Drive itself and the front gardens of properties along it. In contrast to the existing layout, the proposed extension would add considerable bulk to the dwelling which would harmfully reduce the openness of this part of the street scene, including obscuring views to properties further along Manor Drive. The relative height of the boundary fence to the extended property would not act as an effective screen such that it would mitigate these harmful effects.
7. While I acknowledge that there were no objections to the proposal, I have taken account of the long-term effects with regard to the character and appearance of the area and views from the public realm. The appellant draws attention to the extended property directly opposite. While this has resulted in two storey development close to the road frontage, this does not have the same prominence as the appeal proposal, due to the different positions and orientation of the two dwellings. Consequently, the extension to this neighbouring property is not incongruous in the street scene as would be the case with the current proposal.
8. I note also the appellant's contention that there are a number of examples of other extensions to dwellings on corner plots that have been permitted. However, while I have had regard to these, I am unaware of the specific context for them and, therefore, cannot make a direct comparison with the proposal before me, which I have considered on its individual merits. Accordingly, I give these other developments limited weight.
9. Therefore, for all the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, it is contrary to Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, which concerns good design principles. This policy is broadly consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly section seven concerning good design.
10. I acknowledge that the proposed extension is intended to create additional living space. However, these personal circumstances do not overcome the harm and conflict with national and local policies that I have found would result from the proposal.
11. Therefore, for the reasons given I conclude that that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR