

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2017

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5630/D/17/3167786

1 Spring Cottages, St Leonards Road, Surbiton KT6 4DF

- 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 M Dungworth against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/16635/HOU, dated 30 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing 2-storey side extension and erection of new 2-storey side extension with a pitched roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing 2-storey side extension and erection of new 2-storey side extension with a pitched roof at 1 Spring Cottages, St Leonards Road, Surbiton KT6 4DF in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/16635/HOU, dated 30 August 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: 01 Revision A, 02 Revision E, 03 Revision B, 04 Revision C and 05 Revision C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matter

2. While the evidence before me refers to the address of the site as St Leonards Road, the road signs placed in the footway spell the name of the highway differently, which is St. Leonard's Road. Nevertheless, in the interests of consistency, I have described this highway as St Leonards Road.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.
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Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey end of terrace house with a gable frontage to St Leonards Road at its junction with a footway that serves Spring Cottages, within the Cadogan Road Conservation Area (CA). The CA is mainly residential in character. According to the Council's Conservation Area 14: Cadogan Road Planning Information document, the CA derives its special character from its mid 19th Century housing that formed the second stage of the Surbiton New Town. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
5. The proposal is to erect a 2-storey extension with a pitched roof at the side of the main house. The existing flat roof 2-storey extension would be demolished and removed to make way for the new addition.
6. A similar proposal with a mansard style roof was recently refused planning permission on appeal. In that case, the Inspector found the new mansard roof to be incongruous and poorly related to the gable roof of the property and the mainly hipped roofs of other buildings in the surrounding area. By amending the proposed design to include a pitched roof, the appellant seeks to overcome the central objection raised by the previous Inspector.
7. In this case, the Council considers that the proposal would have an undesirable terracing effect in the local street scene, whereby separate buildings visually merge due to their close physical relationship. By slightly widening the front elevation of No 1, the proposal would close off the narrow gap between the flank walls of the appeal dwelling and the adjacent building, which is 14 St Leonards Road. However, unlike most other properties along this highway, which are well spaced apart, the existing gap between Nos 1 and 14 is barely noticeable in the local townscape due to its modest width. Consequently, the loss of this gap would not in itself lead to a terracing effect nor would the effect on the character and appearance of the street scene be readily discernable.
8. Although the sidewalls of Nos 1 and 14 would be joined, the sharply contrasting eaves level of these properties, coupled with their pitched roof slopes angling away from each other and differing fenestration in the front elevation would clearly differentiate one building from the other with the new roof in place. These features, coupled with the gable front of No 1, would ensure that the finished dwelling and No 14 would continue to be viewed in the local street scene as clearly separate, distinct entities. By keeping Nos 1 and 14 visually separate from each other, the new extension generally, and its roof specifically, would not lead to a terracing effect.
9. Furthermore, the new roof with a hipped end and a short ridgeline set at right angles to that of the main house would provide an appropriate transition between the new addition and the gable of the host building. It would also reflect the predominant hipped roof form of other properties along St Leonards Road and within the CA. Taken together with the use of matching external materials, the appeal scheme would maintain the character and qualities of the street scene and the local area. Consequently, the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved. The proposal, therefore, overcomes the main objection raised in relation to the previous appeal scheme.

10. The Council is also critical of the proposed development because the new ridgeline would not be set down by at least 500mm from that of the main house, to which Policy Guidance 36 of its Residential Design SPD (SPD) refers. However, SPD Policy Guidance 36 makes clear that this particular requirement applies only to detached houses. As such, it is not applicable in this instance.
11. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area. As such, there is no conflict with Policies DM 10 and CS 8 of the Council's Core Strategy (CS). These policies aim to ensure that development achieves good design, relates well and connects to its surroundings, and respects or enhances those essential elements that contribute to local character and distinctiveness. I find no conflict with the guidance of the Council's SPD.
12. The Officer's report additionally refers to CS Policy DM 12 in support of the Council's objection. However, this policy is not identified in the reason for refusal on the decision notice and relevant extracts from the CS relating to it have not been provided. For the avoidance of doubt, the proposal complies with CS Policy DM 12 as it is described in the Officer's report and with the statutory duty.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition that specifies the relevant drawings and requires the extension to be constructed in accordance with them as this provides certainty. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the finished dwelling, a condition is required to ensure that the external materials match those of the existing building.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and taking into account the absence of any objection from others, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR