

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/17/3170289

13 Hallows Grove, Sunbury-On-Thames, TW16 7LP

- 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 Andrew Bunce against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01933/HOU, dated 22 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of three dormer windows in the side elevation in connection with the conversion of the roof space into habitable accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more procedurally accurate than the application form; I note the Appellant also uses this description on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached house within a dwelling pair of pleasing asymmetrical design. The side of the property, and its principal roof slope, run along part of the Hallows Grove cul-de-sac. This comprises a small number of houses and flats of the same relatively recent period and which through layout, elevations and landscape come together to create an enclave of established residential character with good quality visual attributes. The proposal is as described above.
 5. As touched on above I found this small development from the 2000s to be attractive and well designed and the good quality and varied but simply detailed roofs contribute very positively to this. The particular position of the appeal dwelling is a prominent one within the residential scheme and care needs to be taken in any planned alteration of the form of this dwelling along
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its widely visible flank roofscape. Unfortunately the proposed middle dormer would be excessive in scale relative to the roof slope, to the wall below and to the window sizes found proximate. It would be visually uncomfortable in an architectural context where few if any other dormers are found and the prominence would be so marked. Given the scale of this middle dormer and taken along with the other two which are proposed, and combine as an excessive roof alteration, the property would become 'top-heavy' and ungainly. The appeal scheme would be jarring on the eye and alien in the streetscene.

6. Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (February 2009) seeks to ensure new development embodies high quality design, respects a host building, reflects local character and exemplifies local distinctiveness. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be conflict with this policy. The policy has objectives that are also reflected in the Council's *Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document* (April 2011) and the scheme would also run contrary to this document albeit this publication cannot be expected to cover every eventuality.

Other matters

7. I understand the Appellants' wish to increase the accommodation of this property. I note that there was not objection from neighbours and that privacy would not be threatened. I can see that thought has been given to some design aspects of the dormers with the use of pitched roofs and careful selection of materials. I appreciate the frustration in respect of the pre-application advice albeit this is always made without prejudice to the outcome of a planning application. The argument is put that the scheme would normally be 'permitted development' but whether or not that is the case I have an appeal before me to determine and I consider that this proposal has aesthetic demerits. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
8. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR