
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2017

by Michael Boniface MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/17/3181209

7 Ember Farm Avenue, East Molesey, KT8 0BJ

- 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 & Mrs Blair against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2017/1186, dated 12 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 14 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side and rear extension with loft conversion 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 rear extension with loft conversion and single storey rear extension at 7 Ember Farm Avenue, East Molesey, KT8 0BJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2017/1186, dated 12 April 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL-01, PL-02, PL-03, PL-04, PL-05B, PL-06B and PL-07.
 - 3) The development shall be carried out using facing materials and finishes matching that of the existing building.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling in a street of residential properties of similar character and appearance. The appeal property and its neighbours' appear to date from around the 1930's and there is a strong consistency in the detailed design features of the buildings. Whilst this is so, it is also clear that a number of the surrounding properties have been substantially extended to the side and rear, including at roof level. In this context the Council raises no objection to proposals for a sizable side and rear extension to the appeal property in principal.

4. In this case, the development would involve raising the roof of the property by around 0.6m but also necessitates an area of flat crown roof. This would unquestionably alter the roof form of the original building but I noted that numerous other properties in the street have been extended in this way. The small increase in height would not be notable in the context of the varied street scene and the crown roof element would not be prominent when viewed from street level.
5. The roof would extend to significant depth as part of the proposal and a gable would be added to the rear elevation to accommodate habitable space. The large gable addition would not be particularly characteristic of the area, properties tending to incorporate hipped roofs, but the addition would be located at the rear where it would not be visible from the public realm. Angled views between buildings would allow the altered roof form to be perceived but this would be in the context of other roof alterations and extensions in the street and the gable would by no means be prominent or intrusive. The gable feature would also be visible from neighbouring properties but again, this would be in the context of other roof level alterations in the vicinity.
6. The combined scale and mass of the proposed extensions would be substantial but the property stands within a large plot amongst other large properties, many of which have been extended in a similar manner to that proposed. In my view, the appeal property is capable of accommodating substantial extensions and the proposed development would not appear unduly bulky or disproportionate.
7. The development will not harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, I find no conflict with Policies CS8 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (2011); Policy DM2 of the Development Management Plan (2015); the Elmbridge Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document (2012); or the National Planning Policy Framework, all of which seek good design that respects local character and distinctiveness.

Conditions

8. The Council has suggested a number of conditions. In addition to the standard time period for commencement of development, I have attached a condition requiring accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. It is also necessary to require the use of matching materials so as to ensure a suitable appearance for the development and protect the character and appearance of the area. I do not consider it necessary to require obscure glazing of the first and second floor windows in the north elevation as these windows do not serve a habitable room and would only allow passing views of the side of the neighbour's house. Living conditions would not be harmed.

Conclusion

9. The development would not harm the character and appearance of the area.
10. In light of the above, and having considered all other matters, the appeal is allowed.

Michael Boniface

INSPECTOR