
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2017

by S J Lee BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 6th December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/17/3181883

3 Corsair Road, Stanwell, Staines-upon-Thames TW19 7HN

- 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 D Eastwood against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00696/HOU, dated 25 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant drew my attention to a planning permission¹ that had been granted on the neighbouring property after the deadline had passed for submissions. The Planning Inspectorate's Procedural Guide makes provision for the submission of late evidence in exceptional circumstances, one of which is the determination of planning applications that may have a bearing on the appeal. As the permission related to the neighbouring dwelling, I considered it appropriate to accept the late evidence. In the interests of fairness, I also provided an opportunity for the main parties to provide comments on the relevance of the permission to this appeal. I have had regard to these comments in my decision.
3. The appellant also submitted a revised plan which was not considered by the Council. However, this only included a correction in relation to the location of a detached garage on the neighbouring property, which I was able to observe on my site visit. There is therefore no injustice to either party in accepting this plan.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a semi-detached bungalow in a predominantly residential area. There are a mixture of house types on display in the vicinity of the site, with both two storey dwellings and other bungalows. While there is some

¹ Application reference: 17/01378

variety in the design of the semi-detached bungalows in the immediate vicinity of the site, in the main they generally appear to retain a degree of symmetry and balance, particularly in terms of their front elevations and overall width. This forms an important part of the character of the area. The detached garage at No 1 is separate to the dwelling and thus does little to affect the balanced appearance of the semi-detached pairing.

6. The pair of bungalows on the opposite side of Corsair Close have some degree of asymmetry in terms of their fenestration and the presence of a large dormer window on one roof slope. However, even here they retain a balance in terms of width and scale. Moreover, No 5 has not been extended toward the corner, thus the sense of openness that exists at the junction of Corsair Road and Corsair Close is maintained.
7. The development would result in a significant increase in the width of the dwelling and an associated reduction in space to the side of the building. I note that the Councils 'Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)(2011) states that extensions over 2/3 the width of the existing property would only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The extension would exceed this by some margin and there is no indication that any exceptional circumstance exists in this case.
8. In any event, the extension would not appear as a complementary or subordinate addition to the street scene. Rather, its excessive width would be viewed as being disproportionate and unduly dominant in comparison to the host dwelling. The resulting overall width of the building and small gap to the boundary would ensure the building as whole would appear unduly intensive in relation to its plot size.
9. The negative impact of this on local character would be exacerbated by the site's prominent corner location. While the side and rear elevations are screened to an extent by the high boundary treatments, the roofline would still be visible and thus the sizeable reduction in the gap to the side would still be evident from these vantage points. This would detract from the prevailing character of the junction and the relationship with the building line of dwellings along Corsair Close.
10. The largely balanced and symmetrical appearance of the bungalows would also be undermined by the development. I recognise that the permitted extension at No 1 would also result in a degree of asymmetry, both in terms of its width but also through the inclusion of a front door. The Council clearly accepts that some change to local character in this regard would be acceptable in principle. Nonetheless, the extension at No 1 would be narrower and more proportionate to the host dwelling than that proposed at No 3. It would also result in more space around the dwelling as a result of the removal of the garage. No 1 is also in a less prominent and visually sensitive location than No 3. These represent significant material differences to the proposal before me. As such, this permission does not serve to justify a larger extension at No 3, either in principle or in relation to the individual or cumulative effect on the character of the area.
11. With or without the extension to No 1 being implemented, the development would be excessively wide in relation to the host dwelling and would still appear unbalanced in terms of their respective widths. The extension to No 1 also does not alter my concerns over the reduction in the open character of the

junction or the lack of regard to the width and proportions of the host property. Without the extension to No 1 in place, the negative impacts of the development would be even greater. However, even if I were to conclude that the extension to No 1 provided some form of justification for that before me, there is no mechanism in place that would guarantee it will be built. This also limits the weight that I have given to the extant permission.

12. I therefore find that the development would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, there would be conflict with Policy EN1 of the Spelthorne Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (2009) and the SPD which seek, amongst other things, to ensure development respects and makes a positive contribution to the street scene and that extensions do not over-dominate the host building.

Other Matters

13. The examples of other side extensions drawn to my attention by the appellant do little to justify the proposal. Firstly, these were all two storey dwellings and thus the effect on the overall scale and appearance of the buildings differs considerably. While such extensions have led to a degree of asymmetry with their neighbours, they are still proportionate to the host dwellings and are not overly wide or dominant. There are significant material differences between these examples the development and they do not alter my conclusion.
14. The fact there have been no objections from neighbours does not alter my conclusion on the impact of the development. While there would be no impact on the living conditions of nearby occupants or useable amenity space available to the current occupiers of No 3, these are neutral factors that neither weigh for or against the development.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Lee

INSPECTOR