

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2019

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/19/3226989
52 Redhill Wood, New Ash Green, DA3 8QP

- 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 Banks against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/03749/HOUSE, dated 4 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a double side extension to the East Elevation and the addition of a single-storey rear extension to the North Elevation.
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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 area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a part two, part three-storey detached dwelling located towards the terminal end of a residential cul-de-sac. The area comprises mixed property types in an informal but spacious layout. No 52 is set at an angle to the road. Its three-storey gable end is set closer to the highway than most other dwellings such that it has a dominant presence within the street scene. The proposal would include the sideways extension of the existing dwelling with a two-storey addition.
4. No 52 was the subject of an appeal decision in September 2018 (APP/G2245/D/18/3206753) for what was described as '*the erection of a three storey side extension with balcony to the rear*'. The appeal was dismissed, with the Inspector concluding that the extended dwelling would become a much more prominent feature in the street scene due to its uncharacteristic proximity to the road, which would harm the area's sense of openness. The appeal proposal attempts to address these shortcomings through a slight reduction to the width of the extension and by dropping the height of the ridge by 1.3m and the eaves by 1.4m.

5. Despite the changes, the proposed extension would remain to be a substantial addition that would significantly increase the prominence of the existing building. The distance between the dwelling and the highway would noticeably reduce, narrowing the gap with the low-rise dwellings on the opposite side of the road. I am not persuaded that the smaller proportions of the extension compared with the past appeal proposal would be enough to mitigate the diminished sense of openness that was previously identified.
6. I appreciate that the extension would be well-designed and complementary to the host dwelling. I also recognise the appellant's efforts in attempting to accommodate his additional needs in a sympathetic manner. However, I continue to share the previous Inspector's view that the proposal would be overly dominant and visually intrusive within the street scene by virtue of its height and proximity to the road. I am not persuaded by the appellant's argument that the step down in height would provide an acceptable transition in scale between No 52 and the properties opposite. In my opinion there would remain to be an unfortunate mismatch between the two. Neither do I consider that there would be any benefit to be had by the extension obscuring some of the existing three-storey gable when viewed from the end of the cul-de-sac. The bulk and scale of development overall would still be open to view.
7. I recognise that existing vegetation to the side of the building provides some screening and that further planting could be introduced. But I concur with the previous Inspector's view that the effects of the extended built form by reason of its position close to the road would not be altered by any retained or additional planting.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such there would be conflict with the design principles contained within Policy EN1 of the Council's Allocations and Development Management Plan 2015. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR