
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2019

by M Allen BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P3610/D/19/3226932

Stone Cottage, Woodcote Park Road, Epsom KT18 7EX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Maria Drinkald against Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/00545, is dated 13 July 2018.
 - The development proposed is a front porch extension, rear extension, first floor rear extension, loft rooms including new roof and dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a front porch extension, rear extension, first floor rear extension, loft rooms including new roof and dormer at Stone Cottage, Woodcote Park Road, Epsom KT18 7EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 18/00545, dated 13 July 2018, 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: Drawing Numbers 1730/D/00 dated 08.vi.18, 1730/D/00 dated 02.vi.18, E-1730-GD-01/1, E-1730-GD-01/2, E-1730-D-02/1 and E-1730-D-02/2.
 - 3) All external materials to be used in the works hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council issued a decision on the planning application, but subsequently revoked this. I have not been provided with any decision issued subsequent to this. Thus, as set out above, I have dealt with the appeal on the basis of the failure to give notice of a decision on the planning application.
3. As set out above, the scheme comprises a number of elements. From the submitted information it appears that the Council have no objection to the proposals to the rear of the property i.e. the rear extensions and rear dormer, as well as the proposed rooflights. In reaching my decision, I have therefore considered the elements that are objected to, which are the front porch extension and roof to the loft room.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located within a residential area. There is considerable variety in both the scale and design of dwellings within the vicinity of the appeal property, however I observed that a common design element was the inclusion of forward-facing gable details. In many instances, there was also little spacing between dwellings.
6. The front porch extension would comprise a two-storey addition, with a half-hipped roof, which would extend from the front elevation by approximately 1.97 metres. Whilst the addition would be visible from viewpoints to the front of the property, given that it would be set down from the existing ridge height of the dwelling, it would appear as a subservient addition. Furthermore, it would extend less than 2 metres from the front elevation of the property and would not extend up to the edge of the site. It would therefore not be an overly dominant feature within the streetscene.
7. The existing dwelling does not have a symmetrical appearance to its front elevation, with an existing forward-facing gable to one side. As such, the inclusion of the porch extension would not introduce an unbalancing element that would unacceptably disturb the front elevation. The Council highlight that the scheme would not be similar to the adjoining property of Stonecroft, but neither is the existing front elevation of the appeal property. In my view, it would add to the variety of design in the area, rather than detracting from the areas character and appearance.
8. In terms of the side extension, this proposes an increase in height over the existing two storey, flat roof element, with a pitched roof to the same height as the main roof of the property. This would remove the uncharacteristic flat roof element, which currently relates poorly to the remainder of the dwelling. The pitched roof would be a more appropriate design, in terms of reflecting the pitched roof forms of the existing pair of semi-detached properties.
9. I note the Council's concern that the raising of the roof would result in a terracing effect. However, the gap between the appeal property and the neighbouring property would remain appreciable from the street. Furthermore, the spacing of the two properties that would result would be no different from the relationship I observed between other properties in the street. As such, there would not be any unacceptable terracing effect.
10. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the area. The scheme would comply with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council – Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM9 and DM10 of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council – Development Management Policies Document (2015). Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure development protects the built environment, reinforces local distinctiveness, is compatible with local character and that the character of a street is respected and maintained.
11. I am also conscious of the guidance contained within the "Householder Applications: Supplementary Planning Guidance" document (2004) which

states, in the case of roof extensions, that generally roof ridges should not be raised in level on semi-detached or terraced houses. However, for the reasons given above, I find good reason to depart from this guidance in this case.

Conditions

12. I have imposed a commencement condition in the interests of certainty. A plans condition and a condition requiring the external works to match the existing building are necessary to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Martin Allen

INSPECTOR