
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2020

by Elaine Benson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/W/20/3253447
10 Station Approach, Ashford TW15 2QN

- 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 Singh, Truemove Properties against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01529/FUL, dated 11 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is construction of a third floor to create 1No two bed flat within a mansard roof.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a ground floor commercial unit with 4 flats over the first and second floors. It is sited on a prominent corner plot close to the railway station. The building has recently been extended upwards in the form of a mansard roof to provide residential accommodation. It is now proposed to further raise the height of the mansard and include an additional run of dormer windows to provide one additional unit. The proposal also includes changes to other fenestration and the addition of a parapet wall.
4. The extended mansard roof would be set back from the elevations and this would to a slight degree reduce the massing of the uppermost floor. Nevertheless, the proposal would result in a somewhat top-heavy building as the 'roof' element would be out of proportion with the overall scale of the building. It would have an incongruous appearance.
5. The surrounding area is characterised by buildings of a variety of design, scale and massing. Whilst there are examples of mansard roofs alongside and opposite across Woodthorpe Road, they are of traditional mansard roof types containing one row of dormer windows in a single level. At predominantly 3 storeys, these buildings do not have the overall height and bulk of the host building with the proposed extended roof. The proposal would result in a development that would not conform to the local aesthetic and form. As such,

it would be visually obtrusive and would be out of character with its surroundings. Furthermore, buildings in prominent corner locations are important for creating recognisable and legible places. New development should make a positive contribution to the street scene. The appeal proposal would not do so.

6. There are a number of other residential developments approved or under construction in Station Road and Woodthorpe Road. Whilst noting their scales, they are of various architectural designs and have different contexts. They do not therefore share the design and locational characteristics of the appeal building which has been assessed on its own individual merits. I therefore give these examples little weight.
7. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposal would be contrary to Policy EN1 of Spelthorne Development Plan Core Strategy and Policies Document Plan Document (February 2009), which among other things, and of relevance to the appeal proposal, sets out the Council's general approach towards the design of new development, requiring attractive development that makes a positive contribution to the street scene. There would also be conflict with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document for the Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development (April 2011) which contains more detailed design guidance.
8. The sustainable location of the appeal site is not in dispute. There is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not the Council has a 5-year housing land supply as the appellant states. However, even if I were to conclude that there is a shortfall, the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits which include social and economic factors.
9. For the reasons given the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR