



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2020

by Tobias Gethin BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1153/D/20/3257991

8 Grenville Drive, Tavistock PL19 8DP

- 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 Antony Stead against the decision of West Devon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 1460/20/HHO, dated 19 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed side extension and new entrance porch at dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for proposed side extension and new entrance porch at dwelling at 8 Grenville Drive, Tavistock PL19 8DP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 1460/20/HHO, dated 19 May 2020, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site location plan; Survey Floor Plans (Drawing No 528/02); Survey Elevations (Drawing No 528/03); Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No 528/04); Proposed Floor Plans (Drawing No 528/05); and Proposed Elevations (Drawing No 528/06).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, with particular regard to the side extension.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a two-storey semi-detached property set-back behind a large, open front garden and driveway. The surrounding area includes a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties which exhibit a variety of designs. Several semi-detached properties near to the site have been extended – some in a similar manner as the proposed development – and these extended properties form part of the streetscene. Accordingly, while the

surrounding area has an open character given, amongst other things, the set-back of built form from the highway, the locality has a varied appearance while spacing between properties is not uniform and is generally relatively tight.

4. Appendix 1 of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (JLP) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides guidance on residential extensions and alterations. Amongst other aspects, it sets out that side extensions should not over-dominate the existing house, should generally be subordinate (smaller) and set-back from the front of it and should be of a width to ensure they appear less important than the original dwelling. Advising that loss of space between properties can be harmful to the area's character, it seeks to avoid a terracing effect by ensuring that a gap is left between properties. It also sets out that the extension's roof should be lower than that of the main house where the extension is set-back. Although various measurements for these aspects are provided, they are set out in general terms, qualified with phrases such as generally, normally and may, and the SPD is clear that the individual characteristics of the site will determine the exact distance required for, for example, any set-back.
5. Similar to other side extensions to properties on the same side of the street, the proposed side extension would align with the dwelling's frontage, eaves and ridge. Although it would therefore not be particularly subordinate, it would not be experienced as an inconsistent feature that would be out of character with its surroundings. With its width being less than the width of the existing property, the side extension would also not appear as a dominating addition that would be more important than the original dwelling.
6. Extending two-storey built form near to the boundary with 10 Grenville Drive, the proposed development would reduce the spacing between the properties. However, the change would not be particularly significant given that the existing spacing between them is already visually limited by the relatively high pitched-roof of the existing single-storey garage on the site and the side wall of No 10 abutting the boundary. With the proposed development maintaining the gap to the shared boundary, there would also continue to be a break between the semi-detached properties. While the gap would be relatively narrow, the spacing between the properties would not read as inconsistent given the varied and generally limited spacing between built form in the locality.
7. Accordingly, the proposed side extension would not have an unacceptable terracing effect and would not conflict with its context and the local pattern of development. Given the adjoining semi-detached property, No 6, projects forward of the building's main front wall, it would also not read as unbalancing the pair of semi-detached properties.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. I therefore find that it accords with JLP Policies SPT1, SPT2, DEV20 and DEV23. Amongst other aspects, these require development of a good standard of design to respect and reinforce local distinctiveness, provide a positive sense of place, have regard to the pattern of local development and the wider context, and conserve the area's townscape characteristics. The proposal would also be consistent with the provisions in the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to achieving well-designed places.

9. The proposed development would not comply with all the guidance on side extensions in the SPD, particularly in relation to measurements. However, for the above reasons, I find that the proposal broadly accords with the general aims of the SPD in relation to the visual impact of extensions, including with regards to proposals relating well to the main dwelling and respecting the character of the area.

Other matters

10. The proposed development would bring built form in close proximity to the side window of No 10. However, while the Council raises concerns about a loss of light to the window, the issue does not form a reason for refusal because Officers do not consider that the loss of light would be sufficient to justify a refusal. The evidence before me indicates that that property has other windows which provide sufficient light. I observed on my site visit that the side window also appears to be a secondary window to the property's larger front and rear fenestration. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of the occupiers in No 10.

Conclusion and Conditions.

11. For the above reasons, the appeal is allowed.
12. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. A condition covering the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Tobias Gethin

INSPECTOR