The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 26 November 2020

by Rachael Pipkin BA (Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/20/3259468
7 Conway Drive, Ashford TW15 1RQ

- 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 & Mrs A & S Clarkson against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
- The application Ref 20/00690/HOU, dated 20 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 13 August 2020.
- The development proposed is two storey side extension and front porch.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Number 7 (No 7) is a modest two-storey semi-detached house located within a short section of Conway Drive. This part of Conway Drive is characterised by semi-detached properties separated from each other by a gap which provides a visual break between the buildings. This arrangement of properties contributes to the spacious character of the area.

4. The proposed development would extend the appeal property to the side. This would infill the gap between No 7 and the adjoining property at Number 9 (No 9) which has previously been extended up to the boundary with a projecting first floor extension over the driveway.

5. The proposed extension would be subservient to the host property insofar as it would be set in from the boundary by approximately 0.25 metres and set back from the front elevation. However, it would almost entirely infill the remaining gap between Nos 7 and 9. Furthermore, since it would also include an extension at first floor level, it would make the two adjacent pairs of semi-detached properties appear as a terrace which would be uncharacteristic of this part of Conway Drive.

6. The existing gap between Nos 7 and 9 is already narrower than the gap between the opposite pairs of semi-detached houses. However, this variation is not prominent as a generous gap is still retained. The proposal, despite its set back, would significantly reduce the gap which would be visible in views along

the street and from its junction with the longer section of Conway Drive. The absence of a noticeable gap between these pairs of semi-detached properties would be visually at odds with other properties and would erode the spacious character of this part of the street.

7. The proposed development would be unlike the extension to No 9 as it would extend forward of the building line at ground floor, with a set back first floor and roofline. It would not therefore provide a balanced appearance in the context of No 9 and would introduce a variation of architecture not characteristic of this part of Conway Drive.

8. I conclude the proposed development would adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy EN1 of the Spelthorne Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document 2009 which requires a high standard of design and for new development to respect and make a positive contribution to the character of the area. It would also not accord with the guidance set out in the Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document 2011 which advises that two-storey side extensions should be designed to be subordinate, set in from the boundary in order to avoid a terracing effect. It would also not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks well-designed places through development that is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matter

9. The proposed development would provide additional accommodation for the appellants and improve existing family housing stock. However, these personal and limited benefits do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

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

Rachael Pipkin

INSPECTOR