
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 November 2020

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 January 2021.

Appeal Reference: APP/T2215/D/20/3252723

Land at 1 Sanderling Way, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9RQ

- 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 A Sooch against the decision of Dartford Borough Council.
 - The application (reference DA/20/00128/FUL, dated 24 January 2020) was refused by notice dated 16 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as the “erection of a two-storey side extension”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the “erection of a two-storey side extension”, at 1 Sanderling Way, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9RQ, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference DA/20/00128/FUL, dated 24 January 2020), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a modern residential development which includes both flats and individual houses and which exhibits a striking architectural character. The larger blocks of flats are obviously contemporary in appearance, making use of modern materials and contemporary forms. By contrast, houses within the development are typically constructed in a more traditional way, in terraces or small clusters of two-storey buildings, mainly of brickwork under pitched roofs. These buildings have been carefully detailed and have some rather classical features, such as decorative finials on the tops of party walls that project through roofs and rusticated rendering to some areas.
4. Overall, however, the designs achieve a modern image and the development includes areas of soft landscaping and larger areas of open space that soften the townscape. Indeed, some additional open space is located at the junction

- of Sanderling Way with Waterstone Way and there is a larger area of public open space a short way to the east.
5. Number 1 Sanderling Way is a two-storey house at the end of a short terrace, at a point where Sanderling Way curves to meet Waterstone Way. In consequence, its side elevation is prominent in the streetscene, with a visual impact that is reinforced by the fact that it stands on rising ground. The house has a small private garden at the rear, with a small front garden that is continued around the side of the house, as a landscaped area in front of the existing side elevation. Some trees that have been planted near this side elevation already make an important contribution to the streetscene, although they are not yet mature.
 6. It is now proposed that that a two-storey side extension should be added to the existing house, extending into the landscaped area.
 7. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (which was revised in February 2019) has the aim of making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity but it also emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12).
 8. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan, notably at Policies DP2 and DP7 of the 'Dartford Development Policies Plan' (which was adopted in July 2017). Policy DP2 points out the need to have regard to various considerations, in appraising the relationship of proposed new development to "neighbouring buildings as well as the wider locality". Policy DP7 includes specific design criteria for residential extensions and provides, among other things, that proposed extensions should not be "visually obtrusive" and that "existing significant landscape features" should be maintained.
 9. In this case, the proposed extension would replicate the detailing of the existing house and would maintain its existing architectural character and qualities. The extension would continue the building line of the existing front elevation and, although that approach to the design of a house extension is not always successful in design terms, in this case the finished building would be in harmony with the surrounding development and the project would not detract from the undoubted architectural qualities of the residential layout. The extension would not be overbearing nor overly dominant in relation to the existing building and it would create a new architectural whole.
 10. Of course, it would be particularly important to ensure that the quality of the proposed scheme would be maintained to a high standard, by using materials to match the existing house, and this would require the imposition of a condition to that effect.
 11. The proposed extension would encroach on the existing garden area at the side of the house but would preserve a reduced landscaped area, including existing trees that make an important feature in the streetscene, as noted in the appeal submissions. I am conscious that the retained landscaping would continue to have a significant impact on the quality of the surroundings and would thereby preserve the essential character and appearance of the area. It would be essential, therefore, to ensure that a good landscaping scheme would be

achieved for the retained area following the building works and, again, suitable conditions are necessary.

12. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed extension would be a useful addition to the accommodation at 1 Sanderling Way. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. The design of the proposed extension would be in keeping with the host building and the surroundings and the retention of a significant landscape feature (even if reduced in scale) would preserve the character and appearance of the area.
13. The locality is not within a Conservation Area and is not subject to any such special level of control. Hence, I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle, and I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted, subject to conditions. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
14. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). I have concluded that conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained, as I have already explained.

Roger C Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - unnumbered Ordnance Survey site location plan (1:1250);
 - drawing number 201/02 Rev B (Ground Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 201/03 Rev C (First Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 201/04 Rev A (Roof Plan);
 - drawing number 201/05 Rev C (North and East Elevations);
 - drawing number 201/06 Rev A (South Elevation).
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.
4. During the course of the construction works, any trees that are close to the works, on or near the site, shall be protected by robust timber fences to ensure that they are not damaged as a result of the works being undertaken.
5. Prior to first occupation of the extension hereby permitted, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All these works shall be carried out as finally approved in detail. The landscape works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme approved by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.