
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2021

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/20/3257786

7 Vereker Drive, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey TW16 6HQ

- 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 J Paterson against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00588/HOU, dated 20 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension, partial conversion of garage to habitable space with new roof over and single storey side infill development.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a part two storey, part single storey rear extension, partial conversion of garage to habitable space with new roof over and single storey side infill development at 7 Vereker Drive, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey, TW16 6HQ, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/00588/HOU, dated 20 May 2020, 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: Drawing No DOK/20/JP/02 and the 1:1250 red edged site location plan.
 - (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) Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted the approved first floor windows on the western and eastern elevation shall be obscure glazed and be non-opening to a minimum height of 1.7 metres above internal floor level in accordance with details/samples of the type of glazing pattern to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These windows shall thereafter be permanently retained as installed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's refusal notice as that is more precise.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a brick built detached dwelling within an established residential street. The property is one of a number of 'Berg style' chalet bungalows with distinctive half-hipped side roofs. The dwellings are set well back from the street with spacious front gardens and low brick boundary walls. This sense of spaciousness is continued in so far that there is wide area of grassland with trees which separates Vereker Drive from Hawkewood Road. Overall, and recognising that there have been some minor changes to the fronts of the dwellings, there is a pleasing design consistency in respect of the roof shapes, use of materials and the scale of properties when viewed from Vereker Drive. This adds positively and distinctively to the character and appearance of the area.
5. In contrast to the above, there is not the same level of design consistency to the rear of the dwellings in this part of the street. Indeed, as part of my site visit, I could see that many of the dwellings included rear extensions, some of which were two storey, including the neighbouring properties of Nos 5 and 9 Vereker Drive. I have also been able to consider the appellant's evidence which shows that there is a very similar rear extension at No 15 Vereker Drive, albeit that this projects about 3.5 metres to the rear, whereas the two storey rear projection for the appeal development would be approximately 4.0 metres.
6. The proposed development would be to set well back from Vereker Drive to the side and rear of the dwelling and would not therefore be noticeable from this street. Therefore, the alterations to the dwelling would not cause any significant harm to the distinctive characteristics that prevail in respect of the character and appearance of the property when seen from its front. Owing to the existence of boundary vegetation and the separation distances involved, the development would not be conspicuous when viewed from dwellings on Maryland Way.
7. Whilst the extension would be noticeable from the rear of Nos 5 and 9 Vereker Drive, it would not look out of place in the context of the various extensions that have taken place to the rear of these properties, as well as others in the immediate locality. Furthermore, I do not disagree with the Council's view that subject to a condition requiring specified windows being finished in opaque glass and non-openable, the proposal would not cause any material harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties in respect of outlook, light and privacy.
8. In this case, I am satisfied that the development as a whole would be subordinate in scale to the house and that harm would not be caused to the character and appearance of the area. I reach this view taking into account the main parties' comments about proposed roof design and eaves height.

9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance the host dwelling, or the area, and hence would accord with the design requirements of policy EN1 (a) of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document 2009; the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development' 2011 and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions

10. Planning permission is granted subject to the standard three year time limit condition. It is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. I have therefore imposed a condition to this effect.
11. In the interests of good design, it is necessary to impose a materials condition. Finally, in the interests of maintaining an acceptable level of privacy for the occupiers of neighbouring properties, it is necessary to impose a condition which ensures that the approved first floor windows to the side elevations of the property are fitted with opaque glass and non-opening.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR