



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2022

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M2270/D/21/3281115

8B Broadwater Down, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN2 5NG

- 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 Plumb and Mrs Benavides against the decision of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01749/FULL, dated 20 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the conservatory for a 3.3m ground floor rear extension, a 1.5m first floor rear extension, replacement of windows and doors, new enlarged window to the front elevation, the addition of roof lights, the replacement of first floor tile hanging to timber cladding and render, and a garage conversion, plus internal remodelling works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of the conservatory for a 3.3m ground floor rear extension, a 1.5m first floor rear extension, replacement of windows and doors, new enlarged window to the front elevation, the addition of roof lights, the replacement of first floor tile hanging to timber cladding and render, and a garage conversion, plus internal remodelling works, at 8B Broadwater Down, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN2 5NG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01749/FULL, dated 20 May 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: location plan, and drawing nos. 484/75, 484/76, 484/100, 484/101, 484/102 and 484/103.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be finished in accordance with the details set out in the approved drawings; the Planning, Design and Access Statement; and the application form.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. This part of Broadwater Down comprises detached properties, mostly of an individual design, and which are set back from the road on substantial, well-landscaped plots. This gives the area a spacious and sylvan character. Whilst

the small group comprising Nos 8A, 8B and 8C are of a similar form and style, in other regards they reflect the area's prevailing character.

4. As a result of this scheme, No 8B would be finished in vertical timber boarding at first floor, above white render beneath. Those materials, and the large central first floor glazed area on the front elevation, would contrast with the appearance of its neighbours either side, but would also give the host a contemporary feel. Given the varied and individual style of the other properties on Broadwater Down, they would not be out of place here.
5. As part of its objective of achieving good design, the Council's Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2006 ('SPD') sets out that roof shape is critical to massing. It continues that flat-roofed extensions are normally unlikely to be permitted as they can appear unsympathetic to the form of the original building, particularly if they are two storeys high.
6. The proposed ground floor rear extension and the proposed two storey rear extension would both have flat roofs. As the two storey flat roof would be just higher than No 8B's existing eaves, there would be a slightly awkward junction where it would meet the host property. However, that part of the proposal would have a limited depth, and it would not be generally visible from public vantage points. Moreover, its form and finish would reflect the modern style that the scheme as a whole is seeking to achieve.
7. For the above reasons, and considered as a whole, the scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the host property or the area. Consequently, I agree with the Council's Conservation Officer that the setting of the Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area, whose boundary runs through the host's front garden, would be preserved.
8. The scheme would not therefore conflict with Policy EN1 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, or Core Policies 4 and 5 of the Tunbridge Wells Core Strategy 2010 which require high quality design; respect for context with regards matters such as external appearance and roofscape; and conservation of the Borough's distinctive local character. Neither would it conflict with the broad thrust of the SPD.
9. It would also comply with the similar requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance for good design which is sympathetic to its surroundings, and for visually attractive architecture.

Conditions and Conclusion

10. Turning to the matter of conditions, I have imposed the standard time limit condition and, in the interests of certainty, a condition requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, a condition is necessary requiring the external surfaces to be finished with the specified materials.
11. Summing up, as the scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the host property or the area, it would not conflict with the development plan. Consequently, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR