



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2022

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/21/3287723
10 Fontmell Close, Ashford TW15 2NN

- 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 Thomas Gardner against the decision of the Council of the Borough of Spelthorne.
 - The application Ref 21/01418/HOU, dated 31 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension, a single storey rear extension and the addition of velux windows in the roof to create habitable roofspace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double storey side extension, a single storey rear extension and the addition of velux windows in the roof to create habitable roofspace at 10 Fontmell Close, Ashford TW15 2NN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01418/HOU, dated 31 August 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: 1633 – 100, 101, 105, 111, 112, 115 and 120.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. This part of Fontmell Close is a cul-de-sac, with detached dwellings which are set back from the narrow carriageway. They have a two storey hipped roof form, and a primarily rendered or pebble dashed finish. The proposal would include a front projecting ground floor canopy, and a two storey side extension which would align with the host's front face, and whose side wall would be 0.35 metre from the boundary with No 8. Its eaves and ridge heights would match the host and it would have a similar hipped roof form.
4. As a result, the scheme would not comply with the stance in the Council's Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document 2011 ('SPD') that two storey side extensions should normally be subordinate to the host, with a set back of at

- least 1 metre, and that they should be set in at least 1 metre from the side boundary to avoid a 'terracing' effect.
5. However, the SPD also notes that those standards can be relaxed, and that a more integrated approach, which replicates the existing design, can be successful. It continues that a scheme's acceptability will ultimately be determined on the basis of how it fits in with the immediate area.
 6. Whilst it would be difficult to distinguish the proposed side extension from the host property, its matching form and the proposed unifying materials would ensure that the resultant dwelling would have a cohesive appearance. Additionally, No 8 has a single storey side projection close to the boundary with No 10, and the proposal's slight set in from that boundary, along with the gap at first floor and roof level to No 8 would help to mitigate against any potential terracing effect.
 7. I also observed that, amongst the handful of dwellings on this part of Fontmell Close, No 4 has a side extension of a broadly similar form to that proposed here, as do the similarly designed dwellings at Nos 3, 9, 11 and 13 on the other arm of Fontmell Close. As those extensions have assimilated into, and become part of, the streetscenes, I have no reason to doubt that this scheme would have a similar impact.
 8. Thus, the scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the area, and having regard to the particular context here, it would accord with the general approach in the SPD.
 9. It would also accord with Policy EN1 of the Spelthorne Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document 2009 which requires a high standard of design, and which sets out that development should respect and make a positive contribution to the streetscene and the character of the area, paying regard to matters such as the scale, height, proportions, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land.
 10. Whilst interested parties have raised concerns regarding on street parking congestion, the scheme includes two off-street, angled parking spaces, which I consider to be adequate given the site's reasonably accessible urban location. Finally, I have dealt with the scheme before me on its merits, rather than speculation about the building's future use, including as a house in multiple occupation.
 11. Having regard to the tests in the National Planning Policy Framework, I have imposed the standard time limit condition. In the interests of certainty, and to protect the character and appearance of the area, a condition is also necessary requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, which also set out the proposed facing materials.
 12. For the above reasons, the scheme would not conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore allowed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR