The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 November 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5TH December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/22/3303995
27 Crediton Way, Claygate, Esher, Surrey KT10 0EB

- 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 David & Fiona Forson against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2022/0778, dated 9 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2022.
- The development proposed is a two storey side extension with mansard pitched roof; new open porch to front door with brick upstand, timber posts, timber frame, plain tiles to match existing with brick infill and front door realigned.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more precise than the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached property in traditional estate style with pleasant proportions and elevations. It is located towards the end of a cul-de-sac on a plot which consequently has a 'fan' shape and it is set a little forward of its neighbouring home which, like the appeal site, comes to the boundary with single storey form. The locality is one of homes of broadly similar form which come together to present an established neighbourhood with residential character and pleasing relatively spacious appearance. The proposal is as described.

5. It is well-rehearsed that the Council reasonably seeks to prevent undue 'terracing' effects within its suburban style neighbourhoods to protect character and visual quality and the Appellants have clearly been cognisant of this with the design adopted for the appeal scheme. They have opted for a design of side extension which takes some cue from the shape of the plot, the relative building lines and the relationship to the relevant neighbouring property in the

sense that it is in 'steps' of side and forward projection, and also height, towards the side boundary.

6. Whilst this is a thoughtful approach regrettably in my opinion it would not go far enough to addressing the matter of terracing. The fact would remain that a two-storey structure, albeit set-back, would run to the side boundary. This is a phenomenon very rarely, if at all, seen on Crediton Way which gains in character and appearance terms by the gaps at upper levels between the semi-detached blocks. In places this allows views to countryside, in others it merely provides a sense of space. I recognise that the appeal scheme would not be widely seen due to its form and location but nevertheless it would display as terracing. It would also either prevent the adjoining property doing anything similar, or if that was to happen, result in a full terrace being formed. The fact that the two-storey scheme would abut an existing single storey structure on the neighbouring property would also add to the uncomfortable tight relationship.

7. Policy CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure that new development embodies high quality design, reflects local character and enhances street-scenes. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be conflict with this policy. CS17 has objectives that are also reflected in the Council's Design and Character SPD. In my opinion the scheme would run contrary to its main aesthetic aims albeit this publication cannot be expected to cover every eventuality.

Other matters

8. I understand the wish to extend this dwelling with its generous rear garden and recognise that the scheme would bring benefits to occupiers. I can see that attention has been given to the use of matching materials and window design. I note that no objections were lodged by neighbours. However, having carefully considered these and all points raised by the Appellants I conclude that the matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.

9. The National Planning Policy Framework has been considered and the development plan policy and SPD which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR