

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2023

by John Whalley

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 January 2023

Appeal ref: APP/Z3635/D/22/3308024

80 Thames Side, Staines-upon-Thames TW18 2HF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal of planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Randhir Gill against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application, ref. 22/00905/HOU, dated 26 June 2022, was refused by a notice dated 5 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a roof extension above single storey side extension and extension to an existing rear facing dormer to create further accommodation in the roof space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed extensions at No. 80 on the appearance of the existing house and its immediate surroundings.

Reasons

3. The Council said the proposed roof extension would appear visually obtrusive and out of character with the area. It would not make a positive contribution to the street scene. That would be contrary to Policy EN1 of the Spelthorne Development Plan Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (February 2009) and the Supplementary Planning Document for the Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development (April 2011). Policy EN1 requires a high standard in the design and layout of new development. Proposals for new development should demonstrate that they will create buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity; they should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.
4. Unusually perhaps, the rear elevation, rather than the front elevation of the part single, part 2 storey semi-detached house at No. 80 is the most visible view the public have of the property. That is because its short rear garden backs on to the River Thames towpath, a well used public footpath and cycleway.

5. The Council and a respondent were concerned that the shape of the proposed roof extension would be steeper than that existing and would thus not match the existing property, contrary to their Supplementary Planning guidance on the design of residential extensions. That may be. But the present house is a mixture of discordant shapes, outlines and profiles with an array of inharmonious glazing. Against that, any apprehension that the proposed extension would produce an unbalanced appearance and be out of character seems of little consequence.
6. Of more concern to me is the likely appearance of the proposed extension to what is described as the rear dormer. The Cambridge dictionary describes a dormer as a small roofed structure on a sloping roof with a vertical window built into it. As it is now, the roof structure at No. 80 scarcely fits that description. What is now proposed is that the width of the vertical faced roof structure would be increased by 5.3m to extend to a length of 11.7m with a vertical height of 2.95m. Whatever the definition of the structure, the result would be an unfortunately vertical faced second storey having almost entirely replaced the original pitched roof of the house. The already a somewhat unprepossessing façade would become more dominant and overbearing, falling well short of compliance with the Councils Design Guidance, unfortunately adding to the bulk and dominance of the existing first floor structure.
7. In my view, the roof extension works would cause further significant harm to the appearance of the host dwelling. They would be contrary to the exhortation of local Policy EN1 that developments should make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Whalley

INSPECTOR