



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2024

by **D Cramond** BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3635/D/24/3346765
42 Lynegrove Avenue, Ashford, TW15 1ER

- 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 Mrs Gerda Yezhevskas against the decision of Spelthorne Borough Council.
 - The application Reference is 24/00232/HOU.
 - The development proposed the erection of first floor side extension with partial garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached gable-ended home on a road of established residential character. There is some variation in properties locally, including immediately adjoining the appeal site, albeit most homes are of a similar nature to the appeal property. The layout, the types of homes, the spaces and the gardens all come together to form a streetscene of pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above.
 4. For my part I accept the Appellant's case on the question of the need to preserve symmetry of this semi-detached pair. I feel in this instance the Council has over-played this, not least because the existing side garage means one would not start from a position of symmetry. Furthermore, in this specific case, with a ground floor projection, a planned lower roof line and reflective elevational treatment, I would agree that a frontage set-back need not be a pre-requisite.
 5. However, I am of the opinion that at first floor level a full two storey structure should be kept off the side boundary. I observed that this first floor set-in is very much a characteristic of this avenue as a whole and the sense of space and visual gaps resulting from this make a valuable contribution to the quality of the streetscene. The scheme would markedly impinge upon this. I appreciate the Appellant's point about the unusual nature and positioning of the abutting property and the fact that a true 'terrace' would not be created,
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but nevertheless an upper level gap would greatly diminish and the impact on visual amenity would be negative.

6. Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (February 2009) seeks, amongst other matters, to ensure new development embodies high quality design, with suitable proportions and layout, reflective of context and protective of local character. For the reasons given above I conclude that there would be conflict with this policy. The policy has objectives that are also reflected in the Council's *Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document* (April 2011). I conclude that the scheme would also run contrary to this document and its pertinent 'visual gap' guidance albeit I fully recognise that this publication cannot be expected to cover every eventuality.

Other matters

7. I understand the wish to enlarge this property and I appreciate the impracticality of simply planning a narrower side extension. I have considered the other examples drawn to my attention but by reason of locations, designs and context find them not to be directly comparable to this proposal and, in any event, I must assess this case on its own merits. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework has been considered and the development plan policy which I cite mirrors relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

9. 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